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EXPERIENCES of a BLIND WAR WORKER

BY ELISABETH W. WHITEHEAD

OF the many innovations, good and bad, which the war has brought in its train, the employment of the blind in ordinary industry is surely one which should be welcomed whole-heartedly. For many blind people it has opened up a field of experience far wider than any which they have previously known ; it has enabled the blind man and woman to establish contact with their seeing fellows on a basis of equality, and it has conferred upon them the splendid sense of independence, of normality, of having something to contribute to the common good instead of being a perpetual receiver. One thing, however, is not yet plain, and it is important that the point should be clarified without delay, for it involves the principle at the core of the whole matter. Has this innovation been introduced in response to the requirements of Christian morality which demands justice seasoned by charity for all, and asserts the right to work as one of the fundamental natural rights of man or has it been adopted simply as a matter of expediency ? The Act for the employment of Disabled Persons (a most enlightened measure) certainly suggests the former supposition, but it has not yet come fully into operation. The blind worker in industry has shown himself worthy of the trust that has been placed in him ; the blind university graduate has not yet been given an opportunity to prove himself, in his own proper sphere, equal to the factory hand in efficiency and reliability. In theory the Act is excellent ; the crucial test will come when it is put into practice. It is not sufficient to promise the blind work ; it is essential that a strenuous effort be made to help them to obtain suitable posts. My personal experiences, I admit, do not predispose me to over-optimism. I have battered at many doors, and obtained nothing but sore knuckles for my pains. That is how this article came to be written.

I graduated M.A. with first-class honours in English at Edinburgh, and won the James Eliot prize which is awarded in English to the best student of the year ; afterwards I trained as a teacher and took the University Diploma in Education—but all to no purpose, for I am *totally* blind. Occasional tutoring, a little free lance journalism, and a good deal of depression was all that had come my way. At the outbreak of war, realising that there would ultimately be a shortage of labour, I wrote to the National Institute expressing my desire to help in some way. I received a most courteous reply, but the months and years passed ; journalistic work became increasingly difficult owing to the

shortage of paper, but nothing came to take its place. For four terms I did part-time teaching in a school for the Hard-of-Hearing under the Education Authority, and found the work highly stimulating, but the post was honorary; that was why the Authority permitted me to occupy it. Taxation and the cost of living were steadily rising; I grew desperate. I considered training as a Physiotherapist, work for which I felt no enthusiasm; in order to help pay the fees I volunteered for work in a war factory, and, after a somewhat protracted struggle, I got it.

This was my first job, but I was not elated. What dreams, what fair fancies, what bright illusions lay broken in the dust on that keen morning of early spring when I donned Heller's dark green overall, and received my worker's pass! Heller's, someone once remarked, looks like an American prison; to judge from what I have read of American prisons, it felt like nothing half so pleasant as Miss Martin, the welfare adviser, escorted me across the spacious grounds and into the hubbub of the factory itself. My job was burr-removing, purely manual, unskilled work, which consists in filing away the rough edges left by the machines on the components of the thing which is being made in this factory. What that instrument is, of course, we are not told, only that it is part of the equipment of an aeroplane, and quite small.

Noise of machinery—deafening inferno! To converse with one's immediate neighbour is still possible, but everything at a distance is merged in a confused hotch-potch of sound, like a railway station gone mad. I refuse to concede to Miss Martin that I am likely to find the work interesting; the supposition is simply absurd. I am introduced to Mr. Salterton, the manager of my department, and find that he comes from my own home town in the industrial north of England; being sympathetic but not sentimental, he effectively pours oil on troubled waters. If only people would refrain from pretending that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds, or will be when the war is over, one's temper might get less frayed. Mrs. Taylor, the charge hand at the burring-bench which runs down the centre of the great, humming machine shop, will teach me my job. Christian names are the order of the day here, a gracious custom, and immediately she becomes Rosemary; Anne, Lucy, Margaret, Jean and Hilda are introduced and become my friends in a flash. The job itself is distressingly simple, but very sore on the hands. After two hours of the work I am experiencing sharp pains in my hand and arm suggestive of an electric shock. I am the first blind worker to be employed at this factory, and they are

surprised that I do so well at the job. The girls advise me to take things easy: "You'll raise a blister," they say, but the day would seem unending if I did not work to the limit of my capacity. Only by the ceaseless activity of my hands, in those first days, can I keep the rebellion of heart and mind at bay.

Yet I am learning something besides the technique of my job—learning some of the lessons of life which are not taught in the Universities because they can be learned only in the hard school of experience. Rosemary is a past master of that school, though her formal education ended, with a sigh of relief, at the age of fourteen; but life has dealt her sorrows that have taught her a maturity of thought and action that are beyond her years, and a profounder gaiety of spirit than the superficial cheerfulness of the more fortunate. She is both shrewd and gentle. Many of the girls are not regular factory hands, but have been called up and taken this work because it enables them to remain in their own homes. It's a hard enough life, working long hours, twice a week from twelve minutes to eight in the morning till eight o'clock in the evening and on alternate Saturday afternoons, and taking your turn on night shift. Hardest of all for many of them is the waiting-time when there is no work to do; I once had three consecutive days of it. Then a job comes forward in a hurry, and one must work overtime at high pressure. Some girls are working for a considerably smaller wage than they received for their regular job, and find it hard to make ends meet. But all are full of a keen sense of humour and what I can only describe as a natural gentility of manner that touches the heart. Conditions are good at Heller's which is of modern construction, though the absence of windows with the exception of immovable skylights in the roof makes it oppressively hot in summer. The pay, £2. 10s. a week, is comparatively low. There is no propaganda patriotism of the flag-wagging variety, but a steady concentration on business with an occasional cheery grouse. The spirit, I imagine, is very similar to that of the trenches in the '14-'18 war.

The lunch hour brings more introductions—buzz of voices in the canteen! The food is wholesome enough, though Anne is right when she says the sweet tastes "like a shampoo smells," but tea and a cigarette effectively obliterate the palate's uncomfortable reminiscence. I note with a flicker of amusement that, despite all our talk of equality, the office staff take their meals in a separate canteen where there are actually table cloths, saucers, cups with

handles, and even waitresses. The factory worker, however, must take his place in the queue; at its end one may be sure of meeting Lucy who refuses to be worried or flustered, but goes steadily on with her work. She is nearly always last in the queue because she refuses to push, but whenever there is a service to be rendered Lucy is first in the field, and somehow manages to make you feel that it is you who have conferred a favour upon her. There have been days when she has only just secured her tea but not yet tasted it when the bell has rung for the return to work after the ten minutes' break.

The factory girl often has to stand all day at a machine, whereas the office staff are sitting most of the time, so it is hard to see any logic in this feature of canteen organisation. I reflect that our "rude" forefathers dined together, like Christians, with only the salt to divide the highest from the humblest in the land. It was left to a more "civilised" age to invent the servants' hall, and to the fervent egalitarians to pigeon hole us into inescapable categories according to the work we happen to do.

After lunch we walk in the factory grounds. Every breath of fresh air has become unbelievably precious—funny, but I had not realised that it is a sunny day! The grounds are attractively laid out, but there are no seats, and this means that some of the girls who have been standing all morning prefer to remain indoors, since it is forbidden to sit on the grass. In the cloakroom, where we foregather on wet days, there is a small stock of chairs. Here my story slipped out. There is frankly expressed disapproval of the system, or lack of system, which pushes a blind University graduate into such a job. "We haven't so much education," they say, "but we've got some common sense." Speaking of educational reforms I observe, "We are promised equality of educational opportunity, how much equality do you think there is when it comes to getting a job?" The answer is unhesitating and unanimous: "if it's a good job, there is none." Then Lucy's voice is heard. "God gave you those gifts and you should be allowed to use them," she says, and after weeks of depression my heart is lifted up, for the power and the justice of God transcend the petty tyrannies and the injustices of men.

In the afternoon I have an opportunity to discuss books with Margaret; we speak of the life of Marie Curie, of the book I am reading, "Pedalling Poland," by Mr. Bernard Newman, and of Dante's "Inferno" which I am studying in Italian. Laughing she votes the last an excellent preparation for the life upon which I am entering. I try to remember for her what Dante says of Fortune. Gradually my brain is clearing, and I

am seeing again a truth which has grown obscure. I admire the wisdom of St. Benedict who was the first to recognise the value of manual toil in education. By the end of that first day one thing stood out clearer in my mind than ever before—what seems to us but baffling frustration is only a further stage in the training which Infinite Wisdom ordains.

A deepening knowledge of my companions only serves to strengthen my admiration of them; little acts of kindness are multiplied. I am met each morning by Rosemary's cheerful greeting. Yesterday I happened to mention that my chair is uncomfortably high; to-day she has substituted a lower one, and smiles with pleasure when I remark the change. We talk of her little dog, her family, and the outsize in dinners which her sailor brother cooked the other day. Rosemary has a quick mind and is efficient at her work, yet patient in teaching. The girl sitting next to me is married; her husband has left her—she doesn't know where he is. There is no bitterness or self-commiseration in her tone—just the bald statement of fact; and a few days later she happens to mention how fond she is of children. This is the serious subject most frequently discussed; the impression I get is that before all else these women want to see family life established on a solid foundation. They are inclined to be frankly sceptical over the plans of the politicians who promise "the Kingdom of Heaven" after the war; they know too much of the world. During waiting time I am allowed to read or to make braille alphabets for the girls who are keenly interested. I make a slight slip with my file, and a tiny cut results. This provides a pleasant diversion, for all cuts must be covered on account of the metal filings which will turn the wound septic if given a chance. Rosemary escorts me to the first-aid room, cool and fresh and quiet; 'oh, what a blessed repose there is in this cessation of noise! To come here is rightly accounted a treat. It is always pleasant to meet people who have a vocation for their work, and of these the nurse is one. Mr. Salterton suggests that a lighter touch with the file might serve as well and spare my hands. I try it, but without success. I consult Rosemary; she confirms my own judgment; for this type of steel it's no use, at least with the wartime files which are made of soft metal; "he ought to try it himself, men have no common sense!" Mrs. Turner sends up a caramel, and Rosemary divides her orange, giving a portion to me. The foreman says I must not work overtime—a welcome relief! He adds that I am doing enough work already and "as a matter of fact, this isn't the job for her." "Now, Rosemary, *he's* got

some common sense!" Anne's rich Cumberland accent rings delightfully in my ears, that sturdy English accent that echoes the keen humour and strong good sense she brought from her childhood's home more than twenty years ago.

My work is giving satisfaction, but, as the days pass, it becomes increasingly plain that I cannot continue in it except at the risk of serious damage to my finger tips. This is one of the occupations scheduled for the blind, but, as I pointed out to the Labour Exchange, there is a subtle snare lurking in that convenient little label attached to a neat pigeon hole, "the blind." Blind people vary as widely as do the seeing; some are able to read braille with great speed and efficiency; others do not read it at all. In the good braille reader the nerve-endings at the tips of the fingers are highly sensitive. This, in the doctor's opinion, was the reason for the pain in my hands and arms which was followed by a slight numbness; it was due to the pressure on these nerve-endings which the work involved. Consultations follow, and I am offered another job; this time it is gauging, which consists in testing screws, nuts, and washers by means of a fixed gauge. This is slightly easier on the hands, but still rather painful, and after an hour of it I have developed a blister. The screws and nuts are thick in machine oil, the little ones dig themselves into the fingers, and the washers make tiny surface cuts. In a sense, however, the physical discomfort is a relief. When one gets a job from which it is totally absent the monotony becomes almost maddening, so that I have once or twice been forced to bite my lips to prevent myself from crying out, but that phase passed in time. In this department we had more waiting time than at the burr-removing bench, and I got through a lot of reading, including part of the "Inferno", "The Life of Marie Curie," a thriller, some magazines, the re-reading of "Lettres de Mon Moulin," and the poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins. If Heller's had done no more for me than teach me to know and love the work of this poet, I should owe it a debt of gratitude which I could never hope to repay. They were the source from which I drew strength and consolation in the darkest days. I would try to snatch a few moments of reading before beginning the labour of the day. With what keen delight in that place did I come upon "Pied Beauty":

"Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled
cow:
... And all trades, their gear and tackle
and trim."

My heart rose singing above the grimy
drudgery and insistent din. And in these words—

"Birds build—but not I build: no, but
strain,
Time's eunuch, and not breed one work
that wakes.
Mine, oh thou Lord of Life, send my
roots rain."—

the cry of my own heart finds its perfect expression.

In the evenings I am very tired, though I am released at five twenty-four and am generally home by six, but even on the days when there is no work it is hard labour concentrating upon one's book against the noise of the machines. Miss Martin thoughtfully suggests that I might bring my typewriter and continue my writing during waiting time, but I decline the offer, though with gratitude for the consideration which prompted it; I know that I shall find composition utterly beyond my powers in these surroundings.

Meanwhile the forefingers of my hands are beginning to suffer from this job too. I do not deny that factory work is suitable for some blind people, for those who do not read much braille, or who, having lost their sight in adult life, have hands already hardened to manual toil. They will enjoy the greater freedom and breadth of experience which work among seeing people gives, and, to judge from my experiences, will meet with nothing but kindness and a ready co-operation which will banish every difficulty and bestow a radiant confidence. But manual occupations of this kind are not, in my experience, the proper sphere for the expert braille reader; on physical grounds alone they are unsuitable. Thus it was that I was obliged to obtain my release.

Before I went to Heller's I had been suffering from an acute attack of the depression and diffidence which are the dreary but almost inevitable accompaniment of prolonged unemployment. Heller's swept them away and restored my confidence. Again I saw clearly that it is every man to his trade, and nothing is to be gained by trying to force oneself permanently into uncongenial work. Something, however, was gained by this temporary effort. A friend who is gifted with unusual wisdom and insight assured me that I should write the better for the experience. After I had obtained my release I proved his judgment true. In the months that followed I wrote with a speed and fluency which I had never before achieved. It is not altogether easy for me to explain precisely why this should have been so, except, perhaps, that the effort which Heller's called forth served to strengthen my will, and the writer requires great strength of will if he is to battle successfully against the many discouragements of his trade. Never

before had I been called upon to do work which was wholly uninteresting and utterly uncongenial. At first I had literally to live a day at a time. I dared not contemplate to-morrow. By the time that I left I cheerfully volunteered to finish out the week on the day my release came through, because a rather big job had come forward and I wanted to help the girls through with it. This training transferred to my writing; I began to understand the dictum that writing is one-third inspiration and two-thirds perspiration, and to see that I must get down to it with the same

dogged determination as that which had been necessary to tackle life at Heller's. After all, it is worth a hard fight to do the work that one loves.

Yet this was not all, for the contacts I had made at Heller's had brought home a truth which every writer must know and cherish if he would be true to his art:

"For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of
men's faces."

HOME NEWS

Opening of N.I.B. Home of Rest at Ventnor.—

Readers of this journal may remember that in 1940 the late Mrs. Annie Fisher bequeathed to the National Institute for the Blind a furnished house, Arno, at Ventnor, Isle of Wight. Owing to war conditions it has not been possible to utilise the home heretofore, but last month it was opened as a Home of Rest for blind people of the professional classes. Miss Mary Hodge has been appointed Warden, and three residents—two blinded women, war casualties from America Lodge, the Institute's Home of Recovery at Torquay, and the husband of one of them—have been admitted. They were delighted with the welcome they received.

It was the late Mrs. Fisher's wish that as far as possible the character of the house as it existed when it was her home should be preserved and only a limited number of blind people accommodated, so that, even though a comfortable lounge and dining-room are provided, each single person can be assured of a private bed-sitting-room and each couple a bed-sitting-room to themselves.

Visitors to Arno will always be welcome and much can be done to help the residents by friends who are willing to give their services by acting as escorts, by reading to the residents, by writing their letters, helping them with handicrafts and providing social contacts, as varied as possible, with the outside world.

A Jewish Home for the Blind.—A permanent Jewish Home for the Blind is to be built in this country, within reasonable distance of London, as soon as the necessary permission can be obtained and a suitable site found. This was decided on by the Jewish Blind Society at its annual meeting of governors and subscribers, held at Bloomsbury House last month.

Mr. Alphonse D. Joseph presided, in the absence of Mr. James de Rothschild. He moved

the adoption of the 125th annual report, which stated, among other things:—

"In September, 1939, it was found necessary to open a home for a number of homeless blind refugees, and a temporary home was found at Bushey, Herts. This will have to be vacated after the end of the war. There is a growing need for a permanent home suitable for the Jewish blind of this country, and the Society will have no alternative but to build one as soon as permission can be obtained.

"The call for a home where blind people, who have no one to look after them, can be cared for is too urgent to remain unanswered, and the Committee is optimistic enough to believe that the Jewish community will see that the necessary capital is forthcoming."

Wireless Receivers for the Blind.—In reply to a question asked in the House of Commons last month, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that it was not possible to authorise tax-free purchase of the wireless receivers provided for the blind as a result of the Christmas appeal.

Blind Home Guard.—Taking part in the stand-down parade of the 5th and 6th Battalions of the Leicestershire Home Guard at Melton Mowbray last month was Private V. Higgins who, although totally blind, was an original member of the L.D.V., and has performed valuable service as a telephone messenger.

Shopping Facilities for Blind Londoners.—In our November issue we included a note on the special service for blind shoppers inaugurated by Messrs. John Lewis, Oxford Street, who give the services of a member of the staff with expert knowledge of the goods required to any blind purchaser. The following is an extract from a blind customer's letter:—"I tried visiting the Store alone yesterday, and honestly cannot find suitable words to express my appreciation . . . though on paper this act of courtesy by the firm sounds good, in practice it is even better."

FOREIGN NEWS

News of Finland's Blind.—A circular issued by Mr. W. Percy Merrick to all British Blind Esperantists contains an interesting note from Finland. "Now Finland is out of the war," writes a correspondent, "I can tell you that most Finnish people we have met or are in correspondence with are very glad to get rid of the Germans, who aroused much anger by interfering in the civil administration, which was quite contrary to the agreement." He goes on to speak of a Finnish friend whom many British blind Esperantists have met at Esperanto Congresses, Mr. Einar Juvonen, who is blind and Secretary, we believe, of the chief Finnish Society for the Blind. "Einar Juvonen," he says, "is extremely busy, for he is teaching blinded soldiers not only to read and write but massage. He is also the editor of the two Finnish Braille magazines, one printed in Finnish and the other in Swedish—for the use of

the Swedish minority resident in Finland."

"The House that Jack Built."—For almost 20 years John Angelillo, of Southington, Connecticut, U.S.A., lived in a single room behind a store, blind and penniless. His dog, his only companion, guided him in the streets.

It was not a happy life, just an existence, but John had dreams, one of which was of owning his own home. For the moneyless man it remained only a dream, until the war, when John, who had never had a job, found a good one in a war plant. Daily his dog led him to his machine and stayed at his side. He saved money until he had enough for the kind of house he wanted.

The builders finished it at the week-end and friends visited him—the town's best people, the man who owns the plant where John works, and even the Mayor. John said it was the biggest evening in the whole of his life.

EMPLOYMENT NOTES

By ERIC W. PAGE, Placement Officer, National Institute for the Blind.

Artificial Jewellery Manufacture

Our old friends, the World Moulded Metal Co., Ltd., of Park Royal, N.W.10, are opening a branch in Cardiff shortly. They will require the services of a number of blind men and women for employment on the manufacture of artificial jewellery. They will provide the necessary training, and if satisfactory the workers will be retained as part of their normal peace-time staff. Any blind persons who are interested should write to the Head Office of the firm in London and give their personal details.

Enterprise

Mr. Phillips, of Camden Town, N.W.1, who became totally blind some few years ago, opened up in business as a sub-contractor in the late summer of last year. Operating in the light engineering and allied trades, he has employed a staff of as many as 25 employees and reports that he has not only cleared his overheads and initial capital outlay, but has made a substantial profit. We shall have more to say about this enterprising blind man in subsequent issues of THE NEW BEACON.

PERSONALIA

Mr. W. MCG. EAGAR, M.A., Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind, and Secretary of the British Wireless for the Blind Fund, has been awarded the C.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List.

* * *

Mr. L. F. CHESTER has been appointed Works Manager of the National Institute for the Blind in succession to Mr. T. H. Ridding, whose resignation was announced some months ago. Mr. Chester entered Blind Welfare work in 1920

at the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind. In 1929 he was offered and accepted the position of Workshops Manager at the Leicester Royal Institution for the Blind, which he held until his present appointment.

* * *

Mr. P. RATCLIFFE has been appointed Sales Manager of the National Institute for the Blind and will have under his direction a newly formed department including Mail Order, Showroom, Warehouse and Kiosks. He has been in the service of the Institute for 23 years.

NATIONAL INSURANCE

The White Paper Proposals and the Blind

1. The Government's Proposals.

The only special references to the blind in either Part I or Part II of the White Paper, "Social Insurance," are to be found in Part I, Section XV, Paragraphs 143-146. The proposals there made would have the following effect :—

- (a) The blind would contribute to, and be entitled to benefit from, the scheme under the same general conditions as the seeing (Para. 143).
- (b) On the institution of the new scheme no fresh Blind Old Age Pensions would be granted. People already awarded the B.O.A.P. would keep it, with prospects of its being increased in amount to correspond, on an adjusted means test, with the new rates of Retirement Pension, i.e., 20s. for a single person and 35s. for a married couple. (Paras. 104 and 145).
- (c) Instead of Domiciliary Assistance, blind people would receive insurance benefits and/or National Assistance (Para. 146).
- (d) General responsibility for other welfare services for the blind would remain with the Local Authority (Para. 145).

2. Comparison with Beveridge Proposals.

In two important respects the Government's proposals differ from those of the Beveridge Report :—

(a) The White Paper rejects the proposal made in the Report to pay a Partial Incapacity Allowance to augment the wages of disabled workers. The reason given is that degrees of incapacity are difficult to assess and that disabled workers, if necessary, may obtain National Assistance.

(b) The White Paper does not recognise, as the Report did (Para. 169 (2)), that "the subsistence needs of a totally incapacitated blind person may be more than those attached to many other though not to all other forms of disability."

3. Classification and Benefits.

All blind people would be included in one of the Classes defined in Para. 34 of the White Paper. They will benefit according to their Class, unless excused from Insurance on account of insufficiency of income.

The largest number—40,500 by the last enumeration—will be in Class VI, "Persons Retired and above Working Age." When the scheme comes into full operation they would receive a Retirement Pension of 20s. for a single person and 35s. for a married couple.

The second largest Class—over 25,000—will be in Classes III and IV, which comprise housewives and other persons of working age not gainfully occupied. Workers who become incapacitated would receive an Invalidity Pension of 20s. if single, or 35s. if they have a dependent wife. The corresponding rates for total incapacity caused by industrial accident would be 40s. and 50s. A lower benefit is proposed for married women insured in their own right. People who have never worked would get no Pension, but an Allowance of 16s. would be paid if they are the dependents of an insured worker. Otherwise they must rely on private means or National Assistance.

Workers (Classes I and II)—over 8,000, according to the last enumeration—would be insured for Sickness Benefit at the rate of 20s. for a single person and 40s. for a married couple. Employees (Class I), but not those working on their own account (Class II), would be entitled to Unemployment Benefit at the same rate. Benefits for married women and juveniles would be lower. Those working on their own account, if unable to maintain themselves, would be eligible for National Assistance.

Family allowances of 5s. for each child after the first would be provided. If the head of the household is on benefit an Allowance would also be paid for the first child.

If a blind person's total income, including benefit or earnings, is insufficient, additional grants may be available from National Assistance. They would be administered on a means test; but no commitment is made as to their amount or the nature of the test.

4. The Transitional Period.

Everybody, including of course the blind, who is now entitled to Sickness and Disablement Benefit under National Health Insurance, would at once be eligible for the higher Invalidity Benefit. Those who are not now insured but will be insurable under the new scheme would be entitled to Retirement Pension only after they have contributed for ten years. It is not

clear from Paras. 104 and 145 whether a person now in receipt of the Blind Old Age Pension will be entitled at once to the new Retirement Pension, as will seeing non-contributory pensioners, or whether they will become entitled to the increase only on attaining the age of 70. The former, which would be in accordance with the general logic of the scheme, would solve a difficult transitional problem.

5. Blindness and Other Handicaps.

Blindness in future is to be regarded as one among several causes of destitution or low earnings against which a modern community should provide by Insurance and preferential treatment in matters of employment. Blind people cannot object to the Government's making provision for persons otherwise handicapped. So long as the specific handicap of blindness is provided for, the blind have much to gain from inclusion in a progressive system of National Insurance. Sir William Beveridge's phrase is significant (Para. 169): blindness: "is a special problem, to be dealt with within the general framework by methods appropriate to the special conditions of the blind."

In principle a national cash payment is greatly to be preferred to Domiciliary Assistance with its local inequalities and insoluble problems of chargeability. Recent legislation, designed to favour the employment of the blind, is wholly in accordance with the basic principle of blind welfare, to enable the blind to hold their own and play their part as fully competent members of the community. There is need none-the-less to ensure under the new legislation an adequate standard of living for the blind, whether employed or unemployable. An important element is the fact that the blind have to meet certain expenses which do not fall upon unhandicapped people.

6. The Expense of Blindness.

These special needs could be met in a manner entirely conforming with the National Insurance scheme by a Handicap Pension, additional to other benefits or earnings, paid to the blind and all other persons who suffer from extra living costs and/or reduced earning power.

The case for the Pension was made in evidence to the Beveridge Committee (see Paras. 25, 26 and 27 of Memorandum printed in *THE NEW BEACON*, June, 1942). It was accepted by Sir William Beveridge who, in addition to recommending a Partial Incapacity Allowance, conceded that the subsistence needs of "totally incapacitated blind people may be greater than those of most other disabled persons" (Para.

169). The case for an Allowance or Pension on identical lines has recently been made by the Director of the American Foundation for the Blind (see "A Handicap Allowance for the Blind," by Robert B. Irwin). Such an Allowance is already part of the Social Insurance legislation of Australia and New Zealand.

In view of this wide consensus of opinion, the Government's reason for rejecting both the Partial Incapacity Allowance and the Handicap Pension is singularly inadequate. The argument (Para. 146) that degrees of incapacity due to partial blindness are difficult to assess is particularly unconvincing, as Part II of the White Paper, "Workmen's Compensation," provides for such an assessment whenever partial blindness results from industrial accident.

If it is desired to seek an amendment of the White Paper proposals with a view to having the Handicap Pension embodied in the new Act, attention should be given to a statement made by the Minister of Education, when replying for the Government in the House of Commons Debate on November 3rd, 1944. He said: "Our difficulty in singling out the blind for hardship pensions is that we could not do that without making a similar provision for other handicapped persons, and there is difficulty in defining 'other handicapped persons' and differentiating between them and the blind." The Government have undertaken, however, to decide what persons are "severely disabled" for the purposes of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, and it would be no more difficult to define what people have to meet higher living costs as a consequence of their disablement.

We would wish to see Handicap Pensions made available to every handicapped person who has in fact to meet extra expenses; but our concern is the blind, whose extra living costs are beyond question. The benefits, of the Insurance scheme, however, are calculated in relation to normal costs of living, and there is a clear case for augmenting the benefits in respect of contributors whose cost of living is abnormal. Making the Handicap Pension part of the Insurance Benefit would be in accordance with Parliament's often-expressed desire to provide for blindness outside of Public Assistance. There is no question but that the blind would greatly prefer not to be subject to a means test in a matter where blindness is the only relevant factor once its consequences in extra cost of living are recognised.

When the new system of National Insurance becomes fully effective, the only blind people outside it will be those who have never had

sufficient income, derived from employment or other sources, to pay the required contributions. That means in effect that all blind persons will be insured except those who have not earned a livelihood since leaving school or, possibly, a training establishment. The proposed Handicap Pension would consequently be available for the great majority of the blind. The question whether a payment similar in amount to the Handicap Pension should be made to blind persons who are uninsured scarcely arises, because the uninsured will be maintained by National Assistance, in every case on an assessment of means. It will be borne in mind that parents or guardians of any uninsurable blind persons who are dependents will be entitled to draw a Dependents' Allowance of 16s. per week in respect of them if they are themselves insured persons.

7. Points for Consideration.

It is evident from the nature of the White Paper proposals, and from what has been said in the House of Commons, that a clear and strong case will have to be made if amendments are to be secured. The close relationship which exists between the Local Government Associations and the co-ordinated system of blind

welfare is favourable to the making of a powerful case for the blind. If agreement can be reached by blind welfare generally on the points set out below, there is good reason to hope for success.

1. Are the benefits proposed by the Government (Section 3 above) sufficient for the needs of the various classes of blind people who will be entitled to them?
2. If not, is the proposal to make additional grants, on proof of need, from National Assistance satisfactory?
3. If the answers to Questions 1 and 2 are negative, then should we press for a Handicap Pension for the blind? If so:—
 - (a) Should it be payable as an addition to Invalidity or Retirement Pension as well as to the earnings of the blind who are at work, or to Unemployment Benefit?
 - (b) Should it be paid with or without a means test?
 - (c) Should it be at a flat rate or on a sliding scale according to degrees of incapacity?
 - (d) What amount can be justified?
4. What other or alternative amendments to the White Paper are desirable?

RESIGNATION OF SIR BEACHCROFT TOWSE

Resigns Chairmanship but is elected President of the National Institute for the Blind

CAPTAIN SIR BEACHCROFT TOWSE, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., has resigned the Chairmanship of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind, on account of age and ill-health. He has been Chairman of the Institute's Council for 24 years.

His resignation, which was conveyed to the Council in a letter from him read at its meeting on December 14th, 1944, was accepted with deep regret. Pending the election of his successor, Mr. Henry J. Wagg, O.B.E., Vice-Chairman, will act as Chairman.

At the same meeting, Sir Beachcroft was unanimously elected President of the National Institute for the Blind, an office which has remained vacant since the death of Sir Arthur Pearson.

In his letter to the Council, Sir Beachcroft said:—

"In spite of all the kindness accorded to me by the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Kitchin, the Secre-

tary-General and the Staff, I find it impossible for me to carry on my work to my satisfaction.

"When I first joined the Council in Cambridge Square, the total income from all sources was £9,700 per annum, and we ought to be truly grateful and proud that even now during this present war, with a greatly depleted staff, we are still progressing and that our funds and work have so enormously increased. I know that I myself am very proud that I have been connected with the work, and I feel that the new Chairman ought certainly to be proud of the position to which he will be elected.

"Although we members of the Council may pride ourselves on what we have done, we must not forget that this great success would not have been possible had it not been for the truly magnificent and devoted work of our Secretary-Generals and our Staff. Ever since I have been connected with the work, and attending the office almost daily, I can testify to the truth of

this fact, and I have never come across another Staff who have shown such untiring devotion to the cause of the blind.

"The extra work due to the last war caused the death of our old Secretary, Mr. Stainsby, who was followed by Sir Alexander Diack, whose health was also impaired by the work, and as his successor we were fortunate enough to claim the services of Mr. Eagar, and you yourselves know as well as I do the work that has been done, and the untiring zeal of himself and his staff during the very hard times we are going through.

"In vacating the Chair, may I again impress upon you for the last time, to be most careful in appointing representatives on our Council, as unless selfless devotion to the work for the blind is shown by our Members, the cause of the blind will never progress.

"The N.I.B. is a national work and it does not interfere with any other association or body working for the blind. If we want to dispel the absurd idea that because a person has lost his sight he has lost his brain, all associations and bodies must not only do their own work but combine in helping each other. Life is to a very great extent what we make it, and it is in this way that blindness has to be faced, as it either conquers, or is conquered by, the individual. It ought to be our endeavour to help the blind in their new condition to effect this victory, and become self-supporting, self-respecting citizens.

"In bidding you farewell, my fellow workers, I can assure you I shall always look back with affectionate memory to those good friends, many of whom have passed away, whom I have had the pleasure of meeting in my work, both outside and on the Council and Staff of the N.I.B., and in thanking you once more for all the kindness you have shown to me, I wish you and the Institute every good wish for the future, and may the Almighty help you and prosper your work."

Sir Beachcroft's resignation was received with equally deep regret by the Staff of the National Institute at Headquarters and all its Branches. The majority of the Staff have been personally acquainted with Sir Beachcroft for many years, some during the whole period of his Chairmanship, and they have learned not only to respect him as their leader but to love him as their friend. In order to express their feelings towards him, the Heads of all Departments at Headquarters, and at the Institute's Homes, Schools, Branch Offices and Departments, on behalf of themselves and their staffs, sent personal messages to him, in time to arrive at his home on New

Year's Day. On that day Mr. W. McG. Eagar, the Institute's Secretary-General, and Mr. H. Andrews, the senior official with the longest period of service, visited Sir Beachcroft, and Mr. Eagar read the messages to him. He also presented him with a message in Braille, expressing the feelings of the Staff as a whole which Sir Beachcroft could keep as a memento of the occasion.

This message was as follows :—

To Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E.

"We, the members of the Staff of the National Institute for the Blind at its Headquarters and all its Branches, Schools and Homes, learn with the deepest regret of your resignation of the Chairmanship of the Institute's Council. We are also extremely sorry to hear of the reason for your resignation, but hope that the lightening of the burden of duties which you have for so many years borne will benefit your health and secure for you a long period of enjoyable rest.

"Some of us have been with you since you became Chairman; others of us are newcomers; but all of us have served long enough under your leadership to appreciate to the full the high quality of its inspiration and example.

"It is therefore with a sense of personal loss and a poignancy of regret almost too deep for words that we hear you, in your letter to the Council, bid us all farewell. Our consolation is the knowledge that you have been elected President of the Institute and that, therefore, we shall still be men and women, as it were, of your clan, but we know that in this high office it will only be on rare occasions that we shall have the pleasure of seeing you and speaking with you. You may not know how real and deep that pleasure has been. There are times when tasks are irksome and work is dull, but the presence amongst us of our beloved Chairman has always lightened the task and driven dullness away. In losing your active leadership we lose something irreplaceable; something unique, which your own character has created for us, which your own humanity has rendered precious to us. This is all too inadequate an expression of what we feel, but we believe that it will serve to prove to you our immeasurable gratitude for a great leader and a loving friend.

"We ask you, then, to take with you, in your retirement, our pride in you and our affection for you, and our trust that for many years to come these strong ties will continue to bind you and us together."

A GREAT LEADER

THE resignation of Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., from the Chairmanship of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind, announced on another page, brings to an end a period in the history of blind welfare which is in many ways remarkable. We have no need here to recapitulate the events of the 24 years during which Sir Beachcroft has presided over the affairs of the National Institute, but we should like to record our belief that for all time those events will be connected with the name of a devoted leader and a great gentleman. His courtesy and kindness have smoothed many difficulties; his untiring and unselfish service has been the pattern of duty; his character, he himself, has been an inspiration. Let us hope that for a long time yet he may continue to be our exemplar in the position to which he has been unanimously elected—President of the National Institute for the Blind.

CONFERENCES AND COMMON SENSE

One of the most important functions given to the Regional Bodies established by the Scheme of Co-ordination of Services to the Blind is "the summoning of Regional Conferences" and "the consideration of Resolutions received from Local Bodies" with a view to "fostering regional and local interests, advising Local Bodies and referring matters of national interest to the National Body," that is to the National Institute for the Blind, with its Council of representatives of all the main interests of Blind Welfare. The question of National Insurance is the first test-case by which the effectiveness of this part of the Co-ordination machinery can be judged. The N.I.B. very properly took the initiative in a matter which requires most careful thought and fair consideration of all points of view. It has invited the Regions to hold Conferences or to ascertain the views of their constituent bodies by some other means practicable in the present circumstances. By so doing, it hopes that the views of Blind Welfare as a whole may be presented to Sir William Jowitt in a way which is likely to be effective in bringing the White Paper proposals into harmony with the requirements of the blind.

These proposals as they stand are far from satisfactory. Elsewhere in this issue is an article which makes that clear. But if the blind can speak, perhaps not with one voice, but at any rate in harmonious accord, important changes in the Government's proposals may be secured. If, on the other hand, there is a discord of voices, it is probable that the Government will embody its proposals without alteration in the Bill to be laid before Parliament.

We must by every means possible find means of reconciling the need of the blind for specific consideration with the primary intention of the Insurance proposals to give fair play to all without special provision for special types of handicap.

THE BEGINNING OF PREVENTION

The Press, with its usual skill in picking the currant out of the cake, gave a good deal of publicity recently to the appointment of Dr. Ida Mann, a well-known ophthalmic surgeon, to be the first woman Professor in England. Even from that personal angle the appointment is interesting, but to us it means the accomplishment of the first stage in the plan agreed jointly by the County Councils Association and the Association of Municipal Corporations with the National Institute for the Blind, for building up an adequate system of research into the causation of blindness, the treatment of eye conditions, the care of the eyes and all other aspects of the prevention of blindness with which we are deeply concerned. Dr. Mann's new appointment is to the Department of Ophthalmology which the University of Oxford decided some two years ago to establish in connection with the Nuffield Medical School. The N.I.B.'s Prevention of Blindness Committee gave substantial help to the appeal for the necessary funds, and it is immensely gratifying that in so short a time the money has been found to start that systematic and comprehensive research which must be the foundation

for saving the sight of the general population and reducing the amount of blindness at all ages.

It will be remembered that the Oxford University Department is, in the National Minimum Scheme of Ophthalmic Research, one of five centres to be established, one of them being the already existing Chair of Ophthalmology at the Royal Eye Hospital in South London, and the others being new developments in the Universities of Oxford, London, Leeds and Manchester. The purpose of the Minimum Scheme is to enable the Local Government Association to advise Local Authorities throughout the country to use powers given them in the Public Health Act to contribute towards the cost of preventive research. The Scheme could never have been formed if the Joint Blind Welfare Committee had not been constituted to co-ordinate the policies of Local Authorities in such a matter as this. The Ophthalmological Research Centres included in the Minimum Scheme will be supported by joint efforts of rate-levying Authorities to the tune, we trust, of some £20,000 a year. Oxford has raised for its new Department about £100,000. The full development of its research programme will require not only that capital endowment, but also the assistance of the Board of Faculties in providing certain salaries, and the hoped-for contribution from the Local Authorities. The Departments which will soon, we hope, be established in London, Leeds and Manchester, will similarly be dependent partly on voluntary endowment and partly on public funds. If all goes well, we should be able to pride ourselves before long on a National System of Research for the Saving of Sight worthy of comparison with our National System of Blind Welfare.

THE EDITOR.

MISS MONK'S RETIREMENT

Lunch and Presentations to Headmistress of Chorleywood College

AS previously announced in THE NEW BEACON, Miss Phyllis Monk, Headmistress of Chorleywood College since its inception, relinquished her post at Christmas on reaching retiring age.

To mark the occasion, the Governors of the College gave an informal luncheon at the College on December 15, 1944. In the absence of Sir Beachcroft Towse owing to ill-health, Mr. H. J. Wagg, Vice-Chairman of the Council of the National Institute for the Blind, presided. The following Governors were present: Miss E. Archibald, Miss W. M. Crosthwaite, Miss E. McCall, Mrs. Wheelwright and Mr. J. H. Batty, with Miss Monk, Miss A. Cunningham, representing the Staff, and Mr. W. McG. Eagar, Clerk to the Governors.

After lunch Mr. Wagg read a letter from Sir Beachcroft Towse apologising for non-attendance and also made apologies for Mr. T. H. Tylor, Vice-Chairman of the Governors. Sir Beachcroft's letter was later handed to Miss Monk, after being signed by all present.

MR. WAGG said it was difficult for him to add anything to Sir Beachcroft's letter. He had never had the pleasure of working closely with Miss Monk, but had always followed with keen interest reports on the school which had come before the Education and Research Committee. He referred to the difficulties which the Headmistress of such a school must meet and

to the great advances made in education for women in the past few years. He asked Miss Monk to accept his best wishes for her retirement.

MR. EAGAR said he hoped that the ladies present, who had earned the Institute's gratitude for the work they had done for the College, would all speak. The Staff of the N.I.B. associated themselves cordially with the compliment being paid to Miss Monk. When he first came to the N.I.B. the future of the College was in grave doubt. He was happy to say that it had been found possible to continue the College, which had blazed a trail in the education of blind girls; there was no similar school anywhere else in the world. All who had been in contact with the College had the impression that it owed a tremendous debt to Miss Monk's energy and initiative. That alone would ensure Miss Monk's perpetuation in the name of the College so long as it continued. He hoped that the College would continue on the foundations laid and discover new ways of advancing the cause of the girls who came there and helping them to overcome their handicap. He wanted Miss Monk to know that the Institute had fervent admiration for the work she had done and hoped that she would have a very happy retirement.

MR. BATTY said that when Sir Arthur Pearson first spoke to him about the house being used as a College free from charity as an experiment, and asked him whether he would be willing to

allow this he had no hesitation in agreeing. It was the first experiment of its kind and he was sure that its success was largely and mainly due to Miss Monk, who had been the first headmistress and originator of the tradition which she had carried through. He could not imagine anyone who could look back with more gratitude to providence than Miss Monk for being enabled to carry on the work and bring it to such success. In her retirement she would have enormous satisfaction in knowing that her work of over 24 years had been well done and that she was handing over to her successor, Miss McHugh, the school she had built up. He hoped that Miss Monk would enjoy her retirement as much as he felt she had enjoyed her work at the school.

MISS CROSTHWAITE said that all the fellow-headmistresses on the Board of Governors had felt enormous admiration for the work Miss Monk had accomplished. To be able to carry on such a school, as Miss Monk had done, and make the children forget their disabilities, was a marvellous achievement. She personally was thankful to have had some little association with the College. The atmosphere that Miss Monk had created would never be lost in the school.

MISS ARCHIBALD said that Governors who were headmistresses realised all the difficulties implied in running a school for children with disabilities and could fully grasp the magnitude of Miss Monk's achievement. What struck her most was the free and confident way in which the girls went about. They had played matches of special netball tennis against her school and had always won. The great confidence of the children could only be created in an atmosphere of confidence, trust and friendliness. She would also like to refer to the wonderful academic achievements and the scholarships won at Universities. Miss Monk had done wonderful work for blind girls and had achieved the impossible.

MRS. WHEELWRIGHT said there was nothing left for her to add. It had been a great joy to her to know Miss Monk and she wished her every happiness. She hoped the world would not lose the wonderful knowledge Miss Monk must have and that she would put her ideals to work in other channels.

In replying, Miss Monk said she very much appreciated the presence of the Governors that day. She particularly appreciated Mr. Wagg's presence representing Sir Beachcroft Towse, who had been responsible for seeing that the school had its chance; she had always felt that

Mr. Wagg was a friend of the school even before a governing body had been appointed. She had welcomed the appointment of Governors as she knew it was not right for her to continue to have her own way with everything. The longer she worked with blind children the more she admired sightless people for their spirit. The children appreciated being treated as normal human beings; they wanted to have more opportunities of meeting people and of taking a full share in life. She was confident that Miss McHugh, her successor, would carry the school right ahead and knew that she was also out for blind girls being treated as human beings. In her retirement, the old girls would hold her and she hoped to have more time to write to them; about a hundred were already in touch. She hated generalisations about the blind: each blind child was an individual. She disliked the phrase "the blind," which seemed to treat sightless people as a class not as individuals. In conclusion, she thanked the Governors again for their attendance and gave details of the short entertainment to follow.

The Governors then adjourned to the hall for a short programme consisting of Carols, a demonstration of free movement to music, a pianoforte solo and concluding with the School Song "Our Ship," composed by Miss Upcott, a former member of the staff, with music by Mr. A. E. Bevan, the school's first music teacher.

* * *

Various informal presentations to Miss Monk took place at the end of term.

The Staff entertained Miss Monk to tea, and presented her with a tea-set and a cheque for £12 12s. from past and present members. Miss Monk said she hoped that many old friends would find their way to her home at Jordans and give occasion for the tea-set to be used.

The Gardens and Domestic Staff joined the School carol singing at the end of the usual Christmas Party and presented Miss Monk with a reading lamp. Mr. Stacey, on behalf of the Gardens Staff also gave to Miss Monk a cypress tree, to be planted at Jordans as a lasting memorial of Chorleywood.

The children and some parents presented Miss Monk with a cheque for £14 10s. and a stool made by the girls.

At the close of the School Meeting, Miss Elaine Hett, Secretary of the Old Girls Association, presented a letter to Miss Monk from the Association telling her that an account for £32 had been opened for her with H.M.V. and hoping that, in due course, she would be able to get a gramophone and records.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND

THE National Association of Home Teachers of the Blind of England and Wales, founded in 1943, is making satisfactory progress and has already been able to render valuable service to many of its members.

The first object of the Association is the welfare of the blind, and members believe that no better way can be devised for promoting this side of the work than the establishment and maintenance of the best possible and most efficient Home Teaching Service. Every Teacher must be well aware that the value of the Service to the vast majority of blind people cannot be over-emphasised. The Committee therefore urges all Home Teachers to join the Association and assist in this great work.

The National Association considers that the Service can best be improved to the desired extent only by the employment of more Home Teachers, better training facilities, including a longer period of training for all future candidates, and better conditions of employment for qualified Home Teachers. The employment of more Home Teachers would make it possible for many blind people to be visited more often than they are at present.

For a profession as important and varied as Home Teaching, it has long been recognised in many quarters that training facilities are at present inadequate, though in some areas improvements are being made. The Association desires to see the establishment of training courses for both blind and sighted candidates, which will enable all future Teachers to gain sufficient knowledge and experience to make them capable of rendering the best possible

service to those in their care. It is also hoped that the standard of the examination will be raised considerably.

The Association desires to see the status of the Home Teacher raised and the duties made more uniform throughout the country. No qualified Home Teacher should be paid at a lower rate than the scale recommended by the College of Teachers Sub-Committee last year and all should be included in a satisfactory superannuation scheme.

It is desirable that the position of the Association with regard to the College of Teachers should be clarified. The College, as an educational body, has a great part to play, and many members of the Home Teachers Association are, and will continue to be, loyal members of the College. The Home Teachers Association stands solely for the welfare side of the work. In the belief that the right of self-expression belongs to every individual and section of the community, the Home Teachers feel justified in establishing their own organisation.

Although the Association originated in the North of England, the members ardently desire that it should become a National Organisation. Expression is given to this desire in the election recently held. At present, the membership from Lancashire is five times greater than that from either the Midlands or the South, but each of these areas is given equal representation with Lancashire on the new committee.

The National Association of Home Teachers of the Blind of England and Wales offers all Home Teachers a cordial invitation to join the organisation.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Employment of the Blind.

SIR,—It is with hesitation and diffidence that I venture to make a few observations provoked by the references to the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act in the September issue of *THE NEW BEACON*. I am only too well aware that the onlooker, far from seeing most of the game, misses many details as well as most of the reasons why particular things are done in the way they are. That is why I begin with a plea for leniency should my remarks be irrelevant.

Reports I have received from time to time from Britain reveal some anxiety among the blind as to the position of blind workers in ordinary industry after peace has been restored. The impression given me is that the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act will cover only some of them as far as retention of present jobs is concerned. There are also complaints that those in charge of welfare work in some parts of the country have failed in finding employment for many suitable blind men and women in spite of the demand for labour.

This causes me to wonder whether, possibly, the system adopted in Canada and now increasingly copied in other parts of this Continent, should not be studied by agencies for the blind in Britain. Experience has shown that the placement of the blind in ordinary industry and commerce needs highly trained officials with an intimate knowledge of the peculiar problems of the blind and possessing certain initial qualities. The work of finding a job for a man is, however, only the beginning of the responsibilities of the placement officer. The blind worker needs constant supervision so that problems, with which he may not be able to cope quickly and effectively, may be dealt with as they arise and prevented from jeopardising his employment. The idea of supervision may be distasteful to many of us, but I know it to be essential in the vast majority of cases, not only for the sake of employer and employed, but also for the protection of other aspirants for similar jobs. It has been found that the placement officer can do a great deal to smooth away friction, to remove a feeling of unwelcome responsibility from employers and retain posts which would have been lost in the absence of an efficient and knowledgeable intermediary.

The new Act should also remove the humiliating situation which finds expression in advertisements in your otherwise excellent and stimulating magazine as, e.g., for "Sighted Home Teachers." Here in Canada every Home Teacher, every Placement Officer, every "Field Secretary" (a cross between an N.I.B. Branch Secretary and Secretary of a Local Association), as well as nearly every paid key official, is blind—the majority of them, totally. If this is possible with high efficiency in Canada where distances are enormous compared with those in Britain, surely it is at home. It has been found well worth while, even from a financial point of view, to provide blind officials with guides and cars if necessary, for not only do they achieve better results through example, but the public may be relieved of paying them pensions and subsidies.

The moment, therefore, seems opportune for working out an extensive scheme, not only for the employment of men and women in industry, but for those who have had the benefit of higher education. The Disabled Persons (Employment) Act offers the means for making this possible.

Yours, etc.,

ERNEST WHITFIELD.

3, Russell Street,
Toronto, Canada.

[Note to Dr. Whitfield's letter]

Dr. Whitfield's letters are always stimulating, and on questions of industrial and professional placement he can speak with authority from knowledge of conditions on both sides of the Atlantic. But he may not be aware that the whole field of employment for the blind in this country is now being closely surveyed in the light of the new opportunities created by the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act. The Placement Section of the National Institute, which co-operates with the Ministry of Labour and with agencies for the blind in all parts of the country, is staffed by officers who are all registered blind persons. At many points that Section is organised on similar lines to Placement Departments in Canada and the U.S.A. Plans are already being made for its extension on an agreed scheme to meet the difficult problems of transition from war to peace production. Increased attention is also being given to the need for executive and professional placement, and the National Institute is surveying evidence in its possession to ensure that the more highly qualified blind shall not miss the opportunities created by the new Act and the new ideas.

Our views on the question of the blind home teacher were given in last month's Editorial.—EDITOR.

A BLIND MAN'S GREETINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR

To the Editor of "The New Beacon."

By G. V. WINGFIELD DIGBY.

I CANNOT choose that graceful card for you
Which once I sought with probings of delight—
A vase of smiling blossom, or a view
Of twisting byway, bathed in lunar light :
Or ancient steeple thron'd within her garth
With candl'd glimmer blazing tinted pane,
And ghostly sepulchres beside the path :
Or frozen pool in meditative lane :
Or serried shelving, snug in storied grange
With faded volumes of forgotten lore,
And shadow'd niches, mystical and strange,
And stately candle, dripping to the floor !
And merry peals the distant woods resound
As rusty bell-tongues coronate the air :
Or well, beside a creeper'd cottage door,
With windlass'd bucket dripping from the chain,
And petall'd glories, incandescent, pour
Their bee-humm'd fragrance—Summer come again !
Or, (say), some frigate, stately in the breeze
With damp sheets full, and sparkling in the sun,
Through snow-tipt breakers cresting furrow'd seas
In foamy swell where counter-currents run !
Or pillar'd time-piece, 'nobling panell'd hall
With chain and weight, and stately swinging beat,
And candl'd shadows figur'd on the wall,
Where Past and Future, ever ticking, meet.
Swing on, O brassy orb, with boom and chime !
We turn again another page of Time.

Alas ! I cannot choose a card for you :
So send my own—with picture but in word :
Imagine, prithee, for yourself the view
Of shrine or inn, of blossom'd bank or bird !
Yet I can wish you happiness ahead :
May all your gladdest memories revive
With ev'ry hope that I must leave unsaid—
The best for you in Nineteen-Forty-Five !

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Another Blind M.P.—Mr. Herbert Quin (Unionist), a blind chartered accountant and barrister, has won the Queen's University, Belfast, by-election by 158 votes against Mrs. I. Calvert (Ind.). Thus he becomes the second blind M.P. in the present House of Commons, Sir Ian Fraser being the other. The first blind M.P. to be elected to Parliament was Mr. Fred Martin, of Aberdeen.

Herbert Quin was born in 1890, the elder son of the late Mr. Stewart Blacker Quin, F.C.A. He qualified as a chartered accountant and was subsequently called to the Irish Bar, notwithstanding the fact that he had no sight in one eye, and was short-sighted with the other. He lost his sight in 1927, since when he has continued to practise as a chartered accountant.

In 1934 he published a book on a branch of Company Law which is accepted as the authority on that subject throughout Ireland.

He is Chairman of the Board of Management of Ulster's leading hospital—the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast; Honorary Treasurer of the Belfast Hospitals' After-Care Committee; Founder and Chairman of the Blind Welfare Association for Northern Ireland; and Chairman of the Association for the Employment of the Industrious Blind, Belfast.

Blind Writer's Splendid Success.—Miss Elizabeth W. Whitehead, of 16, Summerside Place, Edinburgh, well known to readers of THE NEW BEACON as a valued contributor, and whose latest article appears in this issue, has gained a splendid success in fiction writing. She has been awarded the first prize of £100 for a story entitled "Adventurous Exile" in a competition organised by Messrs. Burns, Oates and Washbourne for a book from 50,000 to 60,000 words in length suitable for girls between the ages of

12 to 16. Readers of Miss Whitehead's charming article, "France—A Souvenir," which appeared in the October 15th, 1944, issue of THE NEW BEACON, will be interested to hear that the setting of her prize-winning story is in Brittany. Owing to the shortage of paper, the publishers are unable to say when "Adventurous Exile" will be issued; meanwhile, Miss Whitehead is eagerly pursuing ideas for a successor to it.

Blind Man's Munificent Gift to Communist Newspaper.—Mr. T. E. Clarke, of Worthing, who lost his sight when serving in the Royal Marines during the last war, has given £1,000 to the Communist paper, *The Daily Worker*, to be spent in furthering the paper's fund for the purchase of up-to-date printing plant. To a representative of the *Worthing Herald* he said:—

"Ever since I was a boy I have been bothered by the spectacle of people wandering about in want," he said. "I have always wanted to do something for them. That was what sent me into politics. I used to belong to the Labour Party in London, but subsequently my wife and I found more expression for our ideals in the Communist Party. We have always had simple tastes, and never spent much on ourselves. Wasting money on unnecessary pleasures never appealed to us. The £1,000 I have given represents practically all our savings. It has taken a lifetime to get together, but we are very happy to aid the cause in this way. There is not much sense being in this world if you do nothing to try to benefit your fellow men. Giving our money away is our way of doing our share."

Mr. Clarke is a shorthand-typist, but he has augmented his income as a dance band violinist and as a political lecturer.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the deaths of: **Godfrey Heathcote Hamilton**, late Secretary of the National Hospital, Queen's Square, on December 26th. Mr. Hamilton's connection with the National Institute for the Blind went back for over forty years, for in 1902 he was introduced by Mr. Scott, an ophthalmic surgeon

of repute, to the then Chairman of the British and Foreign Blind Association, Mr. Timothy Holmes. Mr. Hamilton was invited to become the Association's Secretary and held this post for six months, resigning to take up the work he subsequently carried on for many years as Secretary of the National Hospital. He did not

however, cease to take a warm interest in the welfare of the blind, and from 1902 until his death served on the Institute's Executive Council; from 1925 onwards he was a member of its Finance Committee. One of the duties undertaken by him as Secretary of the Association was the editorship of "Progress," and this he retained in a voluntary capacity for some years. An interesting link with the past is afforded by the fact that Mr. Hamilton used to claim with justifiable pride that he had had the honour of suggesting the name of Sir Beachcroft Towse as a member of the Institute's Council.

V. H. Goldsmith, who joined the staff of the B.B.C. in 1924 and was for many years General Manager of the B.B.C.'s publications. He was much interested in the establishment of the British Wireless for the Blind Fund, and was one of the B.B.C.'s representatives on the Fund's Committee for some time.

Miss Harriet Delph, of Hackney, on December 12th, after only a few days' illness. Although totally blind she was always bright and cheerful, and no one could be dull in her company. She was educated at the Eastern Road School for the Blind, Brighton, and at the Royal Normal College. She was for many years a Teacher under the L.C.C. being the Headmistress of the Schools for the Blind at High Street, Bromley-by-Bow; Morning Lane, Hackney; and Berkshire Road, Hackney. She carried out her work with the utmost devotion and enthusiasm, and always received excellent reports from the inspectors. She was particularly successful with the very dull or backward blind children, with whom she had unlimited patience. The smallest sign of improvement gave her genuine pleasure. She retired in December, 1927, at the age of 65, and often expressed the wish that she could have continued her school work for a few more years. She, however, occupied herself in copying books for the Braille Missionary Union; and later in knitting for H.M. Forces, St. John's Guild for the Blind, the Leper Guild and various bazaars. The funeral took place on December 16th. The service was most sympathetically conducted by the Rector of Hackney, both in the Parish Church of St. John-at-Hackney, and at the graveside in Abney Park Cemetery. Miss Delph will be greatly missed by many friends and former pupils.

E. Le Breton Martin, from injuries received in a road accident. Mr. Martin was from 1915 to 1920 General Editor of the National Institute for the Blind, and responsible for the editorship of all the periodicals and books published by the Institute. It was during his editorship that

The Braille Review changed its name and format and became known as *The Beacon*, the predecessor of THE NEW BEACON. He was a most versatile man and had a varied and interesting career. He joined the staff of C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd., in the latter 90's and contributed articles of a popular type to *Pearson's Weekly*, *Pearson's Magazine*, *The Royal Magazine*, etc. From 1915 to 1920 he combined the duty of the National Institute's General Editor with that of Welfare Officer for Blinded Officers at St Dunstan's, who were then housed in Portland Place, and he was associated closely in other ways with Sir Arthur Pearson's many activities. Early in the days of wireless he became well-known as a broadcaster, and Uncle Bret will be remembered affectionately by thousands of men and women who, then children, were devotees of the Children's Hour. Later he was a kind of Business Doctor, advising on planning and efficiency, and then became an Entertainments Manager on the big liners which went on luxury trips. At the same time, he did not drop his journalistic work, and besides contributing articles and light verse to the press, he had a small volume of poems published. He reappeared in the world of Blind Welfare as Editor of *Nuggets*, the Braille magazine first issued in the last war and later revived for the use of St. Dunstaners only, and also as a reader of Talking Books. His mellow, friendly voice will be known and sadly missed by thousands of reader listeners. One of his best readings was *David Copperfield*, and he was very proud of the number of letters he received from Talking Book users, congratulating and thanking him for this recording. He was engaged immediately before his death in completing the reading of several Talking Books which he had in hand.

All who met Mr. Martin were charmed with his winning personality and kindness of heart. He was dearly loved by his many friends. His keen sense of humour and delightful manner, his versatility, his culture, are qualities which will be recollected by all those with whom he came into contact.

Fr. William Slattery, aged 72, for the past 35 years Chaplain to the Catholic Blind School, West Derby, Liverpool.

Sir William Jenkins, Labour M.P. for the Neath Division of Glamorgan since 1922, at Port Talbot. Amongst the many prominent positions which he held were those of Chairman of the Glamorgan School for the Blind, and Chairman of the Federation of Education Authorities of Wales.

James L. Cumming, for 13 years Manager of Dundee Royal Institution for the Blind.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"The Road to Freedom."

Under this title, the Guide-Dog Owners' Bulletin has just been published. It is admirably illustrated (though we are sorry Queen Victoria turns such an uncompromising back on the guide-dog owner striding forward on its cover) and is made up of a collection of articles by Captain Deane, Chairman of the Association, Captain Liakhoff, the Chief Instructor of Dogs, and four enthusiastic dog-owners Captain Deane, who "went to scoff and stayed to pray," tells of a fortnight spent by him at the school, which completely converted him to the value of the movement, Captain Liakhoff explains lucidly what a guide-dog can, and cannot, do, and the four dog-owners try in turn to convince the reader that their dog is *the* dog; Miss May Sabeston Walker aptly calls her article "A Life of my Own," and the title sums up what the possession of a guide-dog must mean to those who have been irked by the necessity of a guide. She ends with a delightful story of being accosted by a small boy (she was blind from birth) who, seeing her with her dog, said "with the wisdom of youth, 'You was blind once, wasn't you?'"

Chorleywood College Magazine.

The 23rd issue of the magazine (1943-44) appropriately has as its main article Miss Monk's farewell letter to pupils (past and present), staff and parents. It is a delightful letter, and its words:—"I count my riches greatest having lived here the longest" appropriately sum up the experience of the one person who has seen Chorleywood from its beginnings in the Quaker surroundings of Jordans to to-day; the tone of the letter is one of quiet thankfulness for the past and of happy anticipation for the school's future—a school "very ready to grow new traditions to add to the best of the old."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices of the following pieces of music represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production.

Dances:		s.	d.
19205	Alter, L. Manhattan Serenade, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	..	0 6
19206	Charles, Miller and Gay. Sing a Song of Tomorrow Today, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	..	0 6

19207	Gilbert, J. Shine on Victory Moon, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	s. d.	0 6
19208	Loesser, F. Spring Will be a Little Late this Year, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	..	0 6

BRAILLE BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and Blind Individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books and pamphlets are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covers, unless otherwise stated.

Fiction:

18470-1. Diary of a Nobody, The, by George and Weedon Grossmith. A classic masterpiece of humour bringing back the real flavour of the later Victorian days. 2 vols. 5s. 6d. per vol. F105.

Braille Instruction Books:

19235-6. Pocket Vocabulary in Two Books, compiled by a Home Teacher for her pupil R.H.H. Book I for readers who find unknown signs. Book II for writers. Special small size (5 in. by 4 in.). 2 pamphlets. 3d. each net. E7.

Maps:

19271. War Map of Germany, Western Section (with Key). The Eastern Section of this Map will be published in the next few weeks, and the two Sections will enable the reader to follow all the military operations on the frontiers and inside Germany in the last phase of the War. Pamphlet. No cover. 1d. net. E4.

Political:

18696-8. British Constitution, The, by W. Ivor Jennings, M.A., LL.D. This book gives the ordinary citizen a reasonable and detached introduction to our system of Government, and discusses the more important and controversial problems. 3 vols. 6s. 3d. per vol. F184.

19233-4. Social Insurance, Parts I and II. This is the White Paper presented by the Minister of Reconstruction to Parliament in September, 1944, embodying the Government's modification of the famous Beveridge Scheme. 2 vols. Stiff Covers, "Spirax" binding. 6d. per vol. net. F85.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

Philosophy:		Vols.
Field, G. C. Moral Theory: an Introduction to Ethics	..	4
Heath, A. E. Thinking Ahead: the Place for Reflection in Civilisation	..	1
Lenin. Materialism and Empirio-Criticism	..	7
Stalin. Dialectical and Historical Materialism	..	1
Theology:		
Cadoux, C. J. The Case for Evangelical Modernism: Relation Between Christian Faith and Traditional Theology	..	2
Lindsay, A. D. Religion, Science and Society in the Modern World	..	1
Robinson, H. W. The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament	..	4
Social and Political:		
"Gracchus." Your M.P.	..	2
The Population Problem, by various Authors	..	2
Stoddard, L. Racial Realities in Europe	..	3
Economics:		
Wotton, B. Plan or No Plan	..	5
German:		
Heyse, Paul. Das Mädchen von Treppi, ed. Joynes	..	1
Classics:		
Plato. Symposium	..	1
Biography:		
Isherwood, C. Lions and Shadows	..	3

Miscellaneous :	Vols.
Masefield, J. Nine Days Wonder	I
Current Affairs.	
<i>(For Temporary Circulation only.)</i>	
"British Survey." The Background to Modern Japan.	
The British Commonwealth and Empire (various articles).	
China and Japan (two articles).	
Civil Aviation.	
Ethiopia.	
The German Mind—I, by J. Eppstein.	
Spain and the Argentine (two articles).	
Yugoslavia (two articles).	
Brown, R. Housing Securities.	
Johnson, H. Soviet Strength. 3 vols.	
Porter, C. Public Health and Social Conditions.	
"The 'Round Table.'" Employment Policy: the Government White Paper.	
Great Britain—D-Day and After.	
India: the Political Scene.	

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND.
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

and
Northern Branch,
5, St. John Street, Manchester, 3.

Fiction :	Vols.
Baker, Frank. Miss Hargreaves	5
Berkeley, Anthony. Silk Stocking Murders ..	4
Burton, Miles. Dead Stop	4
Chevalier, Elizabeth Pickett. Drivin' Woman ..	13
Crompton, Richmal. Weatherley Parade	4
Croome, Hester. O Western Wind	5
Delafield, E. M. Late and Soon	4
Doyle, Lynn. Yesterday Morning	5
Heyer, Georgette. Envious Casca	5
Hilton, James. Story of Dr. Wassell	2
Home, Michael. City of the Soul (Sequel to "House of Shade")	4
Lewis, Sinclair. Gideon Planish	6
Morrison, Emmeline. Miss England	5
Morrison, Emmeline. Young Christopher	6
Newman, Bernard. Second Front—First Spy ..	4
Painter, Eleanor. Spring Symphony	6
Ridley, Diana. That was Yesterday	4
Scarlett, Susan. Peter and Paul	3
Stern, G. B. Young Matriarch	14
Taylor, Walker. Admiral's a Spy	5
Various Authors. Selected Stories from the Annie S. Swan Annual	I
Wallace, Doreen. Land from the Waters	6
Wallace, Kathleen. This is the Road	4

Miscellaneous :	
Buck, Frank with Ferrin Fraser. All in a Lifetime	5
Burbidge, W. F. The Military Viceroy, Viscount Wavell	I
Chapman, Olive Murray. Across Madagascar ..	3
Citrine, Sir Walter. British Trade Unions ..	I
Collier, Joy. Algerian Adventure	4
Crawford, Virginia. Church and the Worker ..	I
Curie, Eve. Journey Among Warriors	11
Freud, Sigmund. Psychopathology of Everyday Life	4
Entwistle, W. J. and Gillett, Eric. Literature of England	7
*Gwynn, Denis. St. Columbia	I
Haggard, Lilius Rider and Williamson, Henry. Norfolk Life	5
Henrey, Robert. Farm in Normandy	4
Huxley, Julian. On Living in a Revolution ..	5

Kiernan, R. H. General Smuts	Vols. 3
*Knox, Ronald. Second Eve with	
*O'Connor, John. Christ the King with	
*Charles, Pierre. Divine Lover	I
Leech, Margaret. Reveille in Washington ..	12
†Lester, Muriel. It Occurred to me	6
Levin, Deana. Children in Soviet Russia ..	3
Mackenzie, Compton. Mr. Roosevelt	4
Madge, Charles. Industry After the War ..	2
Marshall, Howard. Over to Tunis	3
Ministry of Information. Fleet Air Arm ..	3
Moorhead, Alan. Year of Battle	6
†Nargis. Thoughts are Things with Extracts from "The Lifted Veil"	I
*Nash, Robert. Saints and Their Ways with	
*St. Thomas Aquinas. On the Ways of God ..	I
Olivier, Edith. Country Moods and Tenses ..	2
Olivier, Edith. Night Thoughts of a Country Landlady	2
Pearson, Hesketh. Conan Doyle, His Life and Art	4
*Pius XI, Pope. Atheistic Communism; an Encyclical with	
*Keating, Joseph. "The Things That are Caesar's"	I
Reynolds, Clifton. Glory Hill Farm, the First Year, 1940-41	3
*St. Alphonsus de Liguori. Conformity with the Will of God with	
*St. Francis de Sales. New Year's Greeting ..	I
*Spellman, Francis J. Road to Victory	2
Stark, Freya. Letters from Syria (1927-29) ..	4
Thompson, Dorothy. Listen, Hans	4
Wavell, Field-Marshal Viscount. Allenby in Egypt (1918-1936)	3
Wells, Zetta and Carveth. Raff, the Jungle Bird	I
Werth, Alexander. Leningrad	4
Willcocks, M. P. Mary, Queen of Scots	7
Juvenile :	
Morrison, Margaret. Mavis Hut	5
Forester, C. S. Poo-poo and the Dragons	2
Grade I :	
Grey, Zane. Betty Jane	7
Hilton, James. To You, Mr. Chips	3
Morton, Stella. "And We Shall Build"	5
* Presented by the Guild of St. Cecilia.	
† Gift.	

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: IS. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

WANTED, for the use of blind prospective Home Teachers, second-hand copies of the **Braille Edition of the Home Teachers' Handbook.** Also, second-hand copies of the **Braille Edition of the Directory of Agencies for the Blind.** Owners who no longer require their copies of these books are asked to send them to the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1945.

Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

THE SOUTH DEVON AND CORNWALL INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND requires sighted certificated **Woman Home Teacher** for Plymouth. Salary according to College of Teachers of the Blind *Report on Home Teaching Service*. Apply in own handwriting, stating age, experience and when free, with copies of three recent testimonials to Superintendent, South Devon and Cornwall Institution for the Blind, Plymouth.

The **EAST SUSSEX ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND** requires a **Sighted Certificated Woman Home Teacher** for Hove district. Salary according to experience, rising to a maximum of £250 plus war bonus and travelling expenses. Superannuation scheme in force. Apply in own handwriting, stating age, experience and when free, with copies of two recent testimonials, to Organising Secretary, E.S.A.B., 165, High Street, Lewes, Sussex.

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL JOINT COMMITTEE FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for two posts of Home Teacher of the Blind. The salary scale for fully-qualified Home Teachers is £180—£10—£250 per annum, plus bonus. The post will be superannuable. Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary Blind Welfare Committee, County Education Offices, Stafford.

HOME TEACHER, female, sighted, certificated, required; commencing salary £180 (exclusive of war bonus) rising to £240 per annum. Applications, stating age and experience, should be addressed to the undersigned.

A. C. V. THOMAS,
Superintendent and Secretary.

Royal Midland Institution for
the Blind,
Chaucer Street, Nottingham.

**COUNTY BOROUGH OF WALSALL
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF STAFFORD
WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND.**

Applications are invited from persons not liable for military service and who must have had practical experience of Basketry (a knowledge of Mat-making would be an advantage) for the appointment of General Foreman at the Walsall Workshops for the Blind.

The salary will be on Scale, £200 per annum rising by annual increments of £10 to £230 per annum, commencing according to experience, plus War Bonus (at present £49. 8s. per annum). The appointment is a permanent one and is subject to the Local Government Superannuation Act 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Applications, stating age, full particulars of experience, etc., and accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, should reach the undersigned not later than January 25th, 1945, in envelopes endorsed "General Foreman, Workshops for the Blind." Candidates must disclose in writing whether to their knowledge they are related to any member or officer of the Council. Canvassing either directly or indirectly is strictly prohibited.

W. STALEY BROOKES,
Clerk to the Joint Management
Committee for the Blind.

The Council House,
Walsall.
December 27th, 1944.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All home teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.

A number of **VACANCIES** are available **FOR BLIND WOMEN AND GIRLS** in the Wimbledon Area of London. This area is one in which a Ministry Hostel is situated, and supervised by the N.I.B. Any female worker willing to take the normal risks run by the average Londoner to-day can earn an average of 50s. per week in Sighted Factories in this Area. Hostel charges: 30s. per week. Apply N.I.B. Placement Section, 224-6-8, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

**CITY OF LEEDS BLIND WELFARE
DEPARTMENT**

Vacancy for Certificated Home Teacher

Applications are invited for this vacancy. The appointment is subject to the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination. The salary scale is £180 to £200, together with a cost of living bonus, at present 25 per cent. of salary up to a maximum of £50.

Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, and accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, should be forwarded to the undersigned not later than February 3rd.

Canvassing in any form, either directly or indirectly, will be a disqualification.

GEORGE GUEST,
Executive Officer.

Blind Welfare Department,
79, Roundhay Road,
Leeds, 7.

**EAST SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
Blind Persons Acts, 1920—1938.**

Applications are invited for the permanent post of female Home Teacher and Visitor of Blind persons. Candidates must be sighted and not over the age of 35 years, and must hold the Home Teacher's Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind. Applications from non-qualified Home Teachers will also be considered, but, if accepted, they will be required to qualify within two years of the date of their appointment. All candidates must have a knowledge of Braille and Moon types, the administration of the statutory provisions relating to blind persons, practical ability to teach Home Occupations, and knowledge of round knitting machine.

The post is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Salary for qualified Home Teacher—£200 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £250 per annum, plus war bonus, at present £40. 6s. per annum.

Candidates must be able to drive a car, travelling expenses being paid according to the County Council Scale.

Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials should be addressed to the Clerk of the East Suffolk County Council, County Hall, Ipswich, and be received not later than February 10th, 1945.

CECIL OAKES,
Clerk of the County Council.

The New **BEACON**

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

VOL. XXIX. No 338.

FEBRUARY 15TH, 1945.

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ASPECTS OF THE DEAF-BLIND PROBLEM

Some Thoughts after Reading an Article

By "MERLYN"

I HAVE just been reading an article by a Home Visitor published in THE NEW BEACON of 15th November, giving her opinions and quoting experiences amongst deaf-blind people. I read it with very mixed feelings. I am myself deaf-blind, and have been so for six years now; I know other deaf-blind people more or less intimately and could check up on many of the views and experiences of the writer of that article.

It is just after tea as I write and I'm sitting in my den with a cosy fire before me and my dog beside me. I am completely at peace with the world—including my relatives.

I suppose I came within the last category mentioned by our visiting friend, but when I read her comments I was surprised to find myself such a tragic figure. Yes, of course, it is tragic; no getting away from that. My life was full and it was suddenly blighted and the ordinary activities were cut off almost as completely as though I had died.

Just about that time, when I was curious to know whether there were other deaf-blind people, and if so, what they were like, I heard of the pronouncement of a leading figure in Blind Welfare. I learned that I ought to be put in a Home because it was too much of a burden for any human being to have me running around loose. Now this gentleman meant well, undoubtedly, just as our home visiting friend means well. He was sincere in his belief I expect, and I understand he is a good worker for the deaf-blind, and is considered something of an authority—as our home visitor probably is also. In both cases; there is that great sympathy for our relatives.

Let it be admitted straight away that there are many deaf-blind people who are a great problem to those in charge of them. Many are unbalanced, nay, I dare say that all of us are to some extent out of alignment—but that applies also to all people. Take any single person and, sooner or later, you will find he has a kink of one kind or another. Maybe it's vegetarianism, or religious fanaticism, or some less obvious kink, but you'll find the kink if you look carefully; the only kink you will probably not find is your own.

So much for the fact that many deaf-blind people are a bit unbalanced, as for instance, the

man cited as having a notion that he's an inventor.

But when you, sir, and you, madam, write an article, you should consider carefully whether the impression left on the reader is likely to be beneficial or harmful to the cause for which you work ; especially is this so when quoting examples. People who read are apt to think you are speaking of " The Deaf-Blind," whereas you are actually speaking of *some* deaf-blind people.

When you present pictures of mentally-defective and even mad deaf-blind people you add greatly to the difficulties of those of us who are neither violently mad nor mentally-defective (not more so than most people, at any rate). When you show the public a timid landlady being chased around a table by a woman with a knife or poker or a wife being terrorised by a hubby with razor blades in his shoes (I carry mine in my pocket—they are more accessible) and knives in his socks (Gadzooks, how can the man move?), you are not helping all the deaf-blind people who already have quite enough difficulty in maintaining their status in a household. I am not talking from "observation"; I am talking from personal experience. There is such a heavy bias in the mind of the average person to believe that, simply because one cannot see and hear, one must be mental, that it is the hardest task in trying to climb back to remove this initial obstruction. It means, in effect, that whatever one says is automatically discounted until one can have proved that one is right. It means that one is treated as a child until one can *prove* that one is a man. In other words, when one becomes deaf-blind one is presumed to be "guilty" and has to work hard to prove that one is "innocent." It is all very well to tell the public about these mentally-defective deaf-blind people, but from my experience there is quite a large number of deaf-blind people who are as normal as the average—that is, they have just the same kinds of kinks and awkwardnesses and twists of thought that outside people have. In fact, one of the astonishing discoveries I have made is how very poor an intelligence *is* the average. It is patent in the way that the masses of the people can be led by the nose by propaganda, by the sort of stuff Hollywood turns out, by the soap-box orator. The deaf-blind as a community can show at least as much intelligence and at least as much real *quality* of spirit, in the way of the higher virtues, as any sighted community.

Let us look at that vivid sample of deaf-blind mentality—the crazy husband with his obsessions and his violence. It is clear that both husband and wife are of the primitive type which knows little or nothing of self-discipline ; but

that type is common enough amongst outside people. The incident could be duplicated *ad nauseum* and the problem is a general social one rather than an example of deaf-blind mentality. Again, the man who has a craze for writing to the King or some other high authority about an invention of his own: the only difference between him and the people who march to the House of Commons to clamour that their own "invention" for putting the world right should be adopted, is that he has not that outlet. As a matter of fact, I knew that man, or his counterpart, and I was "warned" about his kink. But I am curious to know some people and I cultivated him and won his confidence. Only a short time ago I received from him details of an "invention"—a mechanical gadget which, he claims, will enable a person to speak simultaneously to a gathering of deaf-blind people. The gadget was so carefully described, with all measurements, etc., that I could have made it myself and it would have worked. There was nothing impracticable in the mechanics of it. The snags were that it was cumbersome, costly to make and would have very limited application, but the idea was sound. All that is needed to guide that particular kink into harmless channels is a little workshop with a bench and tools and someone to talk sense about mechanics. Instead, the man is in a workhouse with people who can't be bothered or haven't the intelligence to talk to him. Similarly with many other deaf-blind people's "crazinesses"—they are just the same kind of kinks as we all have, only the world is looking for something crazy in the deaf-blind.

The "suspiciousness" of the deaf-blind? Look at the world! Suspiciousness is rife throughout human relationship—in industry, social welfare, politics. It breeds where one personality is subservient to another ; it feeds on lack of information. In industry, the worker is convinced that the employer is trying to "put one over on him"; in politics, one party or one nation is convinced that another party or nation is trying to gain advantage at its expense ; in social welfare, one society looks with suspicion on another, working in the same field. The antidote is more intimate knowledge, a sharing of plans and responsibilities. All this necessitates *close communication*. Applied to the deaf-blind, the remedy is the same. Provide a common means of communication, create an atmosphere of co-operation, and give the deaf-blind person a status and knowledge of what is being planned and done. In passing, how many Blind Associations include representatives of their blind people on their committee? I do not know the answer, but the idea is a sound

one; as employers have already realised in the industrial field.

One can quarrel with a deaf-blind person quite satisfactorily. Here is the technique: (a) in the street, walk as fast as possible, do not talk at all; do not indicate a kerb, but just pull the deaf-blind person with you; if a vehicle is approaching, take one step into the road and suddenly jerk back to the kerb. The shock is good for his system. Do not be too careful to guide him past an obstruction; a little solid opposition will do him good. If you are on a crowded pavement, all the better, because you can get many a sharp jerk and sideways push to emphasize your possession of "the initiative"; (b) In the house, snatch the hand as roughly as you can; hold it in as strained a position as you can; slam the letters out as vehemently and with as little accuracy as you can; then fling the hand away from you as roughly as you can; use your superior "manœuvrability" to get out of range as quickly as you can, leaving him to bite the fender or chew his razor blades.

I appeal to the teachers of the deaf-blind to take a fresh look at the whole problem. By underlining the tragedy of deaf-blindness, by impressing on the deaf-blind and their relatives that they are different, and by encouraging that sense of martyrdom in the relatives, you have created just the conditions which make it almost impossible for an ordinarily intelligent person, becoming deaf-blind, to be anything other than what you find him to-day. You assume from the start that he cannot be normal. You set out to produce a deaf-blind man with a deaf-blind mentality. You encourage him to mix with others like himself and you teach him a means of communication to that end, while you positively discourage him from learning to use a means of communication which will enable him to talk to the ordinary community. You *help* to isolate him. To bring deaf-blind people together in close continuous contact is asking for a mad house.

The solution is to produce, or rather to retain, a normal mentality—to give him every means of mixing with ordinary people, to teach those people that he *can* be a normal person, and to gain for him the status of an ordinary member of a household. In short, the solution of the deaf-blind problem is dilution, not segregation. You began at scratch with every newly deaf-blind person; he has the ordinary mentality of his type of sighted person; *keep him like that*. Do the best you can for the present deaf-blind, who are the result of a complete lack of understanding on all sides; but start to create a new type of deaf-blind person who shall be able to

take his place, even if it be a mere restricted place, as an ordinary human being.

My life is happy in a positive way. My home is a happy one. My relatives are living exactly the same lives as they always lived. The aura of tragedy has long been consigned to the cupboard to stop the family skeleton's bones from rattling. Occasionally, when some earnest newcomer, after flogging his brain for suitable words of sympathy, unbuttons his waistcoat and sighs with relief, he sends another muffler or top hat into the cupboard. But this state of affairs did not just happen. It had to be worked for. I was surrounded by average people, no better and no worse than the rest of the world. They were completely ignorant of the problems of deaf-blindness. They had to be educated. Luckily for all of us I was in a position to educate them. The result is a wonderful success—but it could have been so very different.

The human mind is like a piece of elastic, able to take the strain and stresses of life, but also, given an adequate amount of relaxation, able to keep its resilient nature. When your mind is undergoing some prolonged strain and you are then subjected to sudden additional strain such as a rough or careless word, your reaction is likely to be a flare of temper. The minds of these awkward and difficult deaf-blind people are of the same quality elastic; *not* an inferior quality, but just the same quality, subjected to a continuous strain with very little relaxation, and the gusts of temper are more frequent because the carelessnesses and the roughnesses of people who cannot understand are more frequent. That M.O. was right. To put such people in a mental home is the quick and easy method for all concerned—except the victim; but it isn't the right method. The right method is to create conditions which will relax the strain, and 75% of that strain is produced by the actions and attitude of the sighted-hearing people, especially those nearest to the deaf-blind, and 25% of it by the unguided and untaught mental attitude of the deaf-blind person towards his handicap. A new mentality about deaf-blindness must be created on both sides, such as will enable the deaf-blind person again to feel himself a part of the ordinary world; to get him out into that world again, not as a dog is taken out on a lead for exercise, but as part of the world.

It is a job for specialists, and highly qualified specialists at that. The argument that the deaf-blind are so relatively few that it is not "practical politics" can be answered by widening the view point. There is a world demand for specialists in deaf-blindness. Why not create

an international college for the instruction of teachers and for the instruction of the deaf-blind?

In conclusion, I would pay tribute to all those deaf-blind people—those other Emmas, Roses

and Johns—who have preserved their sweetness and their balance during years of this double handicap. To have done that is to have achieved superlative degrees of self-discipline, fortitude, tolerance and *sanity* such as few outsiders can boast.

HOME NEWS

Scottish Advisory Committee on the Blind.—

In view of the pending changes in the arrangements for the welfare of the blind arising out of the proposed National Insurance Scheme and other new measures, the Secretary of State for Scotland has appointed the Scottish Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind, which has been in abeyance during the war, to advise him on matters relating to the care and supervision of the blind for a further period of three years.

The Committee is representative of Local Authorities in Scotland and of organisations and agencies for the blind and includes a number of persons appointed directly by the Secretary of State.

The following have been appointed members of the Committee:—Sir George A. Waters (chairman), Mr. Frederick Martin, C.B.E. (vice-chairman), Major Charles H. W. G. Anderson, Mr. James Campbell, Miss S. L. Campbell, the Rev. James A. Fisher, Provost William Gourlay, Mr. Charles W. Graham, M.B., Ch.B., Mr. F. W. Hobby, Miss Margaret Jobson, Provost Alexander Mathie, Mr. Charles Murdoch, Mr. Thomas S. Park, Mr. Thomas Smith, Mr. T. H. Smith, and Mr. W. Dixon Swinney.

Mr. G. Marshall, of the Department of Health for Scotland, will act as Secretary.

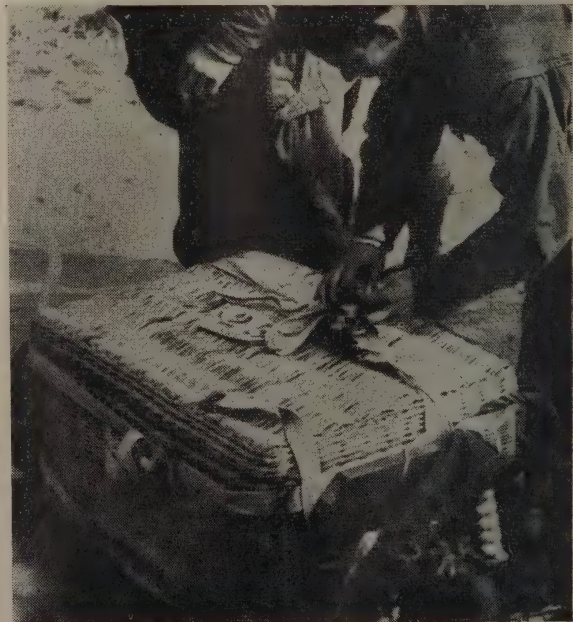
Could the Blind have a Radio Hour?—A correspondent in *The Daily Mirror* recently made the interesting suggestion that the B.B.C. should have a definite "Hour for the Blind," in the interests of the many thousands of regular blind listeners. It was pointed out that the very short "Sidelights on the News" item in the Forces programme has become popular with blind listeners, and that the popularity of this form of broadcasting indicated a further need.

An occasional programme specially for the blind was suggested many years ago by the NEW BEACON, and the suggestion was brought to the attention of the B.B.C. It was not adopted but in those days few blind people possessed wireless sets, whereas now the British Wireless for the Blind Fund provides all blind people with sets.

The Question of Income Tax Relief for the Blind.—On January 16th, LIEUT.-COL. SIR IAN FRASER asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he was aware that the American and Canadian Governments have permitted a special income tax deduction to blind people to compensate them for the special expenses which blindness involves; and if he would study this and consider introducing a similar concession in his next Budget.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I regret that I cannot see my way to recommend legislation designed to give special Income Tax relief in the cases to which my hon. and gallant friend refers.

Blind-made Airborne Panniers for our Troops.—Our soldiers in Europe, Africa and Asia have had cause to be thankful for the skill and in-



British Official Photograph.

The "grub" arrives for the Paratroops in Airborne Panniers made by the Blind.

dustry of many blind men's hands in the workshops throughout the country. For a long time they have been engaged in making airborne panniers. These baskets are 3 feet long by 2 feet wide and consist of two parts, one fitting into the other like the old-fashioned Pilgrim's Basket. They are provided with quick release webbing straps and can be dropped on parachutes when filled with supplies of all kinds up to a weight of 300 lbs. They can be used in all theatres of war where supplies are dropped from the air, and, of course, need to be of first-rate craftsmanship.

A Residential Hostel for Blind Industrial Employees.

—The successful establishment of Plaisance House, 2, Lancaster Avenue, Wimbledon, S.W.19, as a Residential Hostel for Blind People Employed in Industry, is a sign of the times and illustrates a development of welfare work running parallel to the opening up of factory employment for blind workers. As blind men and women have shown their capabilities in war factories in many directions, the demand for their services is likely to continue, and a Hostel which provides them with a pleasant home within a reasonable distance of their places of work should therefore prove of permanent benefit.

The Hostel is administered by the National Institute for the Blind. The premises have been rearranged, reconditioned and furnished to accommodate 22 blind residents, men or women. The bedrooms, arranged as dormitories, contain three, four or five beds, and each resident has a combined chest of drawers and dressing table. There is a bathroom on each floor, and a laundry has been equipped for the use of the women residents. There are two lounges. One has plenty of comfortable armchairs, a wireless set, talking book equipment, Braille books and papers and games; the other is intended for community games and gatherings, dances, concerts and other social events.

The charge made for board and accommodation is 30s. a week, and includes breakfast,



Photo by C. K. Bowers, Acton.

Plaisance House, the New Residential Hostel at Wimbledon for Blind People Employed in Industry.

a three-course meal in the evening, and full board at week-end.

People disabled in other ways than by blindness can be accommodated when, and so long as, the accommodation is not required by blind people. Enquiries with reference to accommodation should be addressed to the Wimbledon Employment Exchange, Griffiths Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19.

Current Affairs in Braille.—The war has brought a spate of books, pamphlets and articles on current affairs. Few of them have enduring significance, but they are the background against which the intelligent sighted reader forms judgments on contemporary events and ideas. These publications are largely denied to the blind, unless they can afford the services of a reader.

N.I.B. Pendas, Oxford Pamphlets, and magazines such as "World Digest" bridge part, but only part of the gap. The ideal solution would be a cheap method of producing a large number of limited editions in good Braille. Such editions, however, are only justifiable if there is a real demand for them.

In an experiment to test demand for current affairs literature, the National Institute for the Blind is publishing this month a limited

edition of "Remobilisation for Peace," by Sir Ronald Davidson. This is one of the popular "Target for To-morrow" series, and deals comprehensively and vigorously with the vexed question of transferring labour from war to peacetime production. It is in one large Braille volume, price 2s.

Southern Regional Conference on National Insurance.—A Conference on the White Paper proposals relating to National Insurance was convened by the Southern Regional Association for the Blind, and held at Denison House, S.W.1, on January 17th. Captain J. A. D. Cochrane-Barnett presided over a large and representative audience, and after welcoming the delegates he called upon Lieut. the Hon. L. W. Joynson-Hicks, M.P., to move the five resolutions, given (in the slightly modified form in which they were finally adopted by the Conference) below.

In moving them, he reminded his hearers of the dangers of imagining that the provisions of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, valuable though they were, would solve all the problems of the blind. Speaking on the final resolution, which recommended that the present co-operation between local authorities and voluntary agencies should continue, the speaker said in effect that while planning had its place, the idea that planning and scrapping were synonymous must be combated. When we had something that worked well, it should not lightly be discarded.

After the luncheon interval, the resolutions were discussed one by one, and finally adopted in the following form:—

1.—The incidence of blindness is such as to require for every registered blind person over 16 years of age a special handicap allowance of a minimum weekly sum of £1 payable out of the National Funds.

2.—The Association welcomes the Scheme for National Insurance contained in the Government White Paper, Social Insurance Part I (Command 6550), providing National Insurance and other benefits for blind persons equally with sighted persons.

3.—The provisions of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, are welcomed, but the Government's attention should be drawn to the fact that a majority of blind people are above employable age.

4.—Financial responsibility for, and administration of, special welfare services including the certification of blindness, the keeping of the Register and the payment of Grants to Voluntary Societies shall remain with Local Authorities.

5.—The existing framework of the organisation for dealing with Social Services for the Blind should be maintained by the Local Authorities and Voluntary Agencies in conjunction with the Regional Associations and National Organisations.

Votes of thanks to the Chairman, to Lieut. the Hon. L. W. Joynson-Hicks and to Miss Spencer Wilkinson ended a Conference which provided at once a valuable exchange of views and a gratifying unanimity in relation to the issues under discussion.

THE WORLD IS OUR CONCERN

By J. JARVIS

READERS of this journal will no doubt recall with pleasure the excellent material contributed to it some time ago by a deaf-blind man who adopted the pseudonym of "Merlyn." This courageous member of the handicapped community has now furnished a stimulating contribution to a discussion on the subject of the supply of Braille writing machines to the blind, which is taking place in the correspondence columns of *Progress*. Together with other correspondents, he deprecates the comparatively high cost of such machines to the consumer, with its consequent restriction on the demand for them, and suggests that, since their mass production would presumably be uneconomic if undertaken with only a national clientele in view, it should be considered from the point of view of world demand.

This concrete example illustrates a general principle which might profitably engage the attention of the blind and those who minister to their needs. In a field in which common problems are the result of a common situation, that created by the loss or absence of sight, surely much more constructive thinking and planning, as well as much bolder execution of projects, could be accomplished if it were effected internationally. At present, it is true, there is a good deal of very commendable, though unofficial, interchanging of ideas and information between the organisations for the blind in the various Allied countries, and many blind people exchange personal letters with others of similar interests who reside abroad. But what is needed is machinery which would ensure, for example, that the latest developments in the placement

of blind workers in open industry in Sweden should as soon as possible be common knowledge in all countries, particularly in those in which the placement of the handicapped worker is being taken seriously. It is this writer's impression that minor differences of opinion, such as that which long existed between workers for the blind in this country and those of the United States on the question of Standard Braille, have tended to assume an importance out of all proportion to that which they would occupy if a permanent international organisation, with all the day to give and take implicit in its activities, were in being.

The immediate need of the blind in all countries would appear to be the setting-up of such a body, which should, as far as practicable, combine all the functions at present exercised by the various national organisations and operate them with the assistance of all for the benefit of all. Research into such questions as the prevention of blindness, the education and training of the blind (including the provision of special apparatus) and into their employment and after-care, could then be undertaken with the minimum of duplication and wasted effort. It is presumably intended at the earliest convenient date after the war to call an International Conference together so as to continue the work of the New York Meeting. Such a Conference would obviously provide the best setting for the launching of a permanent international body. Since, however, the blind cannot—by reason of their restricted numbers—command the priorities in transport and other facilities which would enable them here and now to select their own Dumbarton Oaks and to convene there within a matter of months, it would seem expedient for them to avail themselves forthwith of the means for international collaboration which already exist, and to cover as much as possible of the preliminary groundwork by correspondence. The delaying influence of the time factor might be still further reduced if the assistance of the International Red Cross or some similar organisation were sought at the outset.

Under the constantly increasing pressure of public opinion, the leading statesmen and journalists of the Allied and neutral countries have in rapid succession voiced the urgency of laying the foundation of a stable and constructive international order at the earliest moment, and it is high time that the blind should, in their turn, make all possible arrangements for the international pooling of information and experience.

PERSONALIA

MR. JOHN CLARK, of 12, Porthall Place, Brighton, who has been registered blind since 1942, attained his hundredth birthday on January 19th. His niece, with whom he lives, gave a small party for him to which were invited Mrs. MacIntosh, Secretary of the Brighton Society for the Welfare of the Blind, and Miss Grey, his regular Visitor from the Society.

Mr. Clark, who retired on pension at the age of 80 years from his employment as porter at Messrs. Chipperfield & Butler, Brighton, is still hale and hearty, taking a keen interest in present day affairs. Until recently his hobbies included the making of all kinds of household brushes from horsehair, and the collection and mounting of butterflies.

His hundredth anniversary was specially marked for him by the receipt of congratulatory telegrams from the King and Queen, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Brighton.

* * *

MR. I. M. BANKES-WILLIAMS, who has been associated with St. Dunstan's Training Centre at Church Stretton for nearly four years, latterly as Director of Education, was recently appointed Headmaster of Wellington School and took up his duties last month. He will have a number of reminders of his association with St. Dunstan's: several books, a present from the trainees; a wine chest, from the staff; and a silver jug, from the war-blinded women at the Belmont Hostel.

* * *

As from February 28th, 1945, the permanent address of the REV. CANON C. E. BOLAM, F.R.Hist.S., will be Deloraine Court, Lincoln.

* * *

LORD NORMANBY has been awarded the M.B.E. for starting a school for the blind in a German prisoner of war camp. In a salvage heap he found an old Braille instruction book, and having become much interested in the blind prisoners, he taught himself Braille. He was a German linguist, and through his efforts most blind British prisoners of war were ultimately assembled in this camp.

* * *

Blind for the past 34 years, Fr. LEO M. GRATY, O.S.M., who has been stationed since the war at Begbroke, Oxford, celebrated his golden jubilee in the priesthood this month. His blindness did not put him on the inactive list. He was sent to the Servite Church in Fulham Road, London, where he had been first appointed after his ordination, and did valuable work there until the war began, when he went to Begbroke.

"I WILL BE CANDID"

IV.—On the Education of the Blind.

By ARTHUR E. WILSON

THE year is 1925 and the scene is a large classroom. Sixty boys, aged about fourteen years, are busy answering examination questions from the wall-board. The teacher, who is perched upon a chair checking papers, has evidently not mellowed with his many years of life, and his surly, scowling countenance does not belie his disposition. His mouth drops almost as much as his large greying moustache. He is short in stature and is constantly chewing tobacco.

The industry of the class is but little disturbed by the boy who now and anon slips from his desk in the very back row to walk to the front of the room to study a problem on the board. His sight is too poor to enable him to read the questions from his place—his position in the form makes it necessary for him to sit in the back row of desks—dignity is more important than eye-strain! As a matter of fact he is totally blind in one eye, and is so blind in the other that whenever he thinks the teacher is not looking he uses a powerful magnifying glass to help him read and write. Presently the teacher moves round the room looking at the work of the pupils. Approaching our boy from the blind side he pauses before giving him a violent poke in the ribs thereby causing the boy to blot his paper. "It doesn't matter much what answers you give, you'll lose half marks with writing like that. Shocking! It's sheer idleness." He resumes chewing and ambles off.

An hour later an art class is in progress in the same room. Same teacher in charge, same boys trying to reproduce on paper a vase of flowers balanced precariously on the edge of the teacher's desk; all except our boy who gave up trying to draw several months earlier. The teacher is talking to him: "You should try to draw. You are idle. You won't get any marks for this subject and your average will be down, so don't blame me if you are bottom of the form." This was not the first occasion upon which he had talked in this vein to the boy, but this afternoon he was particularly nasty. Something happened inside the boy—his whole young being was in a fury. "Idle!—bottom of class—no marks—marks off for bad writing—One day he'll see."

There began for the boy a reaction to life—

reaction against special treatment meted out to him because he couldn't see as well as others. There sprang into life a fierce flame of desire to achieve something—equality of accomplishment. Obviously to do this he had to be better than the others in order to discount his disability. The examination papers were marked by the Head, and, in spite of a zero mark for Art, our boy secured top place in the form. That something had done its work.

Could there be a clearer case of the need for education in a "special school"? Then why am I glad that I was not sent to such a school, or, to be more precise, why am I glad that I was not deprived of education in an ordinary school? In reply I can only ask you to come with me to a training institution for the blind a few years later.

The scene is set in a dining room, not a very large room, but large enough to dine thirty or so hungry young men. The meal has not yet been served and there is a hubbub of conversation—a normal dining room with normal tables and . . . Stop! Where are the knives? Dinner is served. A good dinner and well appreciated to judge by the way it is being shovelled away. Not one knife in the room! Why should there be? It is much easier to eat with a *fork and spoon!* Let us ask the white-haired genial Matron for a knife and be surprised with the reply "You are now in an institution for the blind and must learn to do things the way blind people do. That is part of your training." *Training how to be blind!*

In the evening a young man from Toc H reads to a dozen or so of the men. All are enjoying the book, for it is a Zane Grey, but who more than Tom, as can readily be evidenced by the energy with which he is swaying backwards and forwards? Just a habit he has, but it looks a little or very odd according to the violence! Let us speak to him quietly about it sometime. Let us explain that it is just a habit which he has acquired without realising it and tends to make him look "blind." Gosh! What a stream of abuse! Ah well, a little touchy—quite natural—but apart from that, and one or two other little idiosyncrasies, he is a very likeable chap.

Then there is Bernard who is really "blind"—turns out to work occasionally with tie round outside of collar, etc. Poor boy!

But *there are* those who are far from being "blind." They can get about amazingly well and their conduct is more or less quite normal. As we talk to them we are astonished to find how clever they are—indeed their conceit knows no bounds!

Why should I exaggerate the faults and take no heed of the good points? Take all the totally blind persons you know who have been educated in special schools (excluding Chorleywood, Worcester and Norwood) and how many appear a little or very much abnormal—but they are not abnormal except by appearance, or to the extent to which they have not been taught how to develop the pictures conveyed by other senses.

I have made a distinction between the three Colleges and the other schools as undoubtedly greater attention is paid in these establishments to the achievement of normality. They have succeeded in some measure, but even these excellent institutions have no occasion to rest upon their oars. The following quotation from the letter of Miss E. W. Whitehead which appeared in the March issue of *THE NEW BEACON* illustrates my point:—

"My own experience is that children who enter institutions in babyhood remain emotionally undeveloped. It was an observation shared by my fellow pupils in schools for the blind. Institution life seems to have the effect of retarding the development of character, so that the child remains a baby when she should be a little girl, the big girl is a little girl when she should be an adolescent, and the adolescent hesitates upon the threshold of adult life until the institution is left behind. My own school the Royal Normal College, had certainly none of the salient defects of the institution for the blind; yet, after a year at the University, I was told on all hands what a tremendous development had taken place in me, and I knew that what I was told was true."

The following Minute of the governing body of a Children's Home makes interesting reading and throws some light upon one aspect of our problem:—

"The Committee gave further consideration to the placement of girls upon completion of the course of training in domestic science. A number of complaints had been received from householders with whom girls had been placed that the girls did not settle as members of the household. On the other hand, the Superintendent reported that there was every indication that when placed in hospitals and similar institutions the girls were happy and efficient. Some members of the Committee expressed the

view that as the girls had spent most of their lives in institutions they should not be placed in ordinary homes where they are likely to be unhappy, but that employment should be secured for them in hospitals and similar institutions. Other members took the view that as the girls had already spent so much time in institutions they should be given an opportunity of enjoying home life, but agreed that care should be exercised in the selection of the employer. **RESOLVED** that the Superintendent be instructed to place as many as possible of the girls completing their training as domestic workers in private house employment, but that he be permitted to make other arrangements where this is considered to be in the interests of particular girls."

The conclusion is inevitable and undeniable. Years of residence in an institution tend to create certain attitudes of mind which are characteristic of the "tone" of the particular institution. This is perhaps another way of saying that environment is a factor of vital importance in the development of character. In the same way as the atmosphere in a home substantially affects the reactions of children brought up in it, so, the background atmosphere of a residential school (whether for seeing or blind children) plays a most important part in their development.

Even as Eton and Harrow leave their mark upon students, so with schools for the blind; and the kind of mark which is imprinted is a factor which can be controlled. The tone of an institution or school is something which may take years to cultivate on sound lines; but it can be lost in a very short space of time. It depends almost entirely upon the inspiration effused by the Head and other members of the staff. The importance of the right type of teacher (or, as I prefer, leader) being appointed to the staffs of special schools for the blind, would appear to be self-evident, but I am not at all sure that teachers of either the right quality or outlook have been very much attracted to blind schools. Some are undoubtedly called to the work, revealing outstanding qualities of leadership and understanding, and to these we owe a deep debt of gratitude. A superintendent of an institution responsible for the training of young blind persons told me just before the war that "the object of educating the blind is really to teach them sufficient to enable them to occupy their time happily. These successful blind people we hear so much about are freaks..." (I am not at all sure I heard the rest). No wonder Bernard sometimes put his tie on the outside

of his collar! No wonder he was what we call "blind." He was in truth a "poor boy," for he had been robbed of his opportunity. Indeed, robbed of himself by just such an outlook. No wonder we find so many young blind persons on the registers who are failures.

Now let us look at a recently published Annual Report of one of the leading centres of blind education in this country:—

"Its object is to train the blind to earn their own living and to render them independent, self-reliant citizens. Incredible as it may appear this is an object which . . . has succeeded and does continually succeed in accomplishing, and there are now many hundreds of former pupils not only earning their own living, but in several cases assisting their parents . . ."

"*Incredible as it may appear*"—Just a hint of "freaks" and we train them! Exaggerated? Perhaps a little, but deep down it is there and it is wrong. There is nothing incredible about it and there certainly should be no appearance of incredibility. Have you ever been to such an education centre on a visiting day? A day when the trainees are put on show like performing seals! How wonderful! How amazing! *How rubbish!* "As we talk to them we are astonished to find how clever they are. Indeed, their conceit knows no bounds."

I have every admiration for a person who is successful in his trade or profession, be he coal miner or basket maker, solicitor or clergyman, piano tuner or Oxford don, sighted or blind, but in no case do I see anything remarkable or incredible. I am emphasising this point because in my view it is more important than is generally realised. Graduates from training institutions tend, through their background, to have artificial values of themselves in relation to society. Non-seeing children brought up in an unnaturally sheltered atmosphere when thrown abruptly into the outside world are likely to experience considerable difficulty in adjusting their outlook. Without previous knowledge or experience the spontaneous though often misguided sympathy of seeing persons, to say nothing of jealousy arising from a mistaken impression that the success of a blind person belittles their own achievements, can be devastating. Special schools must be as unartificial as possible so that upon leaving the students are not filled with stupid pride or conceit but are possessed with true knowledge of themselves in relation to society.

By some curious movement of the retina I lost my sight temporarily, actually for a little more than a week. Upon its restoration I was for the first time really conscious of seeing.

I am quite sure that a person totally blind from birth is not conscious of the lack of sight. He could only become aware of it if sight could be given even temporarily to him. To-day I am no more conscious of blindness than I was of sight. In other words, it seems as natural to me to be without sight as it did to see. Why is it then that men and women who have nothing but blindness in common should find pleasure in association? Simply because they take each other for granted as being normal. When the same association exists between seeing and non-seeing, life *becomes* more normal for the blind person. Miss Whitehead achieved it in the University and quickly developed. There are, however, two fundamental preliminaries to the achievement of this normal life: (1) the blind person must have received sound education and know how to see properly, and (2) open minds on the part of seeing persons. I am afraid that the latter condition is often completely prevented by propaganda—"incredible as it may appear" and other variations of the blind sobstuff which are put out to arouse pocket sympathy. This *may* be necessary, but it is certainly very harmful psychologically and this aspect may be better considered in a separate article concerned with voluntarism. The point I wish to stress at the moment is that it is important, nay, essential, for the proper development of blind children that they should have sufficient intercourse with seeing children and, it is equally important that this intercourse should be individual as well as through groups. Blind students are able to study at the University Colleges by using typewriters and textbooks in Braille. Why then should not younger blind persons, for at least part of their later school life, take part in the activities of Young People's Colleges or even the new Secondary Schools?

If blind children are to receive the full benefit of the Education Act, 1944, we must see that the Special Schools are properly staffed with teachers who know much more about blindness than the reading and writing of Braille, and are real leaders. We must see that individual blind children are taught normally and normality. We must avoid the setting up of wrong complexes by the elimination of lionization of what is in reality mediocrity and ensure right association and intercourse. Having done this we can begin with the greater problem of ensuring that each child which is unfortunate enough to be without sight shall become an asset to society—that the world may be richer through his handicap. That, and nothing less, must be our aim.

ONE WAY OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

TWO writers in this issue, both of whom are blind, emphasise the need for international co-operation in solving the problems with which they deal. As we try to peer into the future, most of us gain conviction that it is only by spiritual and material co-operation on the broadest basis that mankind can hope to progress towards the ideals which, despite the innumerable buffets of history, it persists in holding indomitably aloft. Perhaps the most formidable barrier preventing the mutual understanding and sympathy that should naturally exist between the ordinary men and women of the world's nations is ignorance—ignorance, mainly, of languages. To discover and react to the natural tie between people of different nationalities is almost impossible if we cannot know, except through the superficial and transitory method of translation, what the people of another nation say, what they think, and what they do.

The blind communities in the various nations are not people apart; they are as much a segment of multifarious national life as any artificial group, such as an army or a trade union or a rotary club. But they are, we believe, more closely linked together than any other section of society, no matter how naturally or artificially it is grouped. The deaf form a similar section, but although from a physical point of view, their reach is wider and broader than the reach of the blind (they can move freely throughout the world, they can move freely throughout the world's literature), the nature of their handicap isolates them as individuals.

Now this close link between the members of a nation's blind community could, we think, be utilised most beneficially by extending it to connect the blind communities of different nations. Before the War, which has so cruelly segregated the nations, there did exist in some degree the basis of an international brotherhood of the blind, and it was being slowly built on by the national societies for the blind. There was a sense of kinship between blind men and women which ignored political boundaries, and a main bond was Braille. Braille as a means of reading and writing, Braille as utilised in apparatus, Braille as a music notation, Braille as a method of education, was a tendency towards an internationalisation of effort to conquer blindness, and thereby the seed of an international understanding was being sown in blind communities.

The present stage of world policies provides the blind with a splendid opportunity of developing the spirit and matter of international co-operation. Active friendship between blind communities may seem insignificant compared with the active friendship of whole nations, but it should be borne in mind that the effect of any sectional action always extends beyond the sections concerned. We need only remember the effects of Christian brotherhood in the early days of Christianity, spreading as the ripples spread when a stone is thrown into the water.

But Braille as a bond is only a beginning in the forging of the links between the blind communities. It may be regarded more as a promising sign than an actual symbol of a community of interest. Braille has brought the British and American blind more closely together, because the two nationalities use the same language, but so far Braille has only *tended* to bring together the blind of all nations. It is a tendency, however, which can be increased in strength, because the production of Braille literature, Braille music, Braille appliances, Braille games, etc., can, owing to its commercial limitations, only be truly economic if it is internationally co-operative. In order to transform the tendency into accomplishment, the blind need to study and master modern languages.

Surely here is a task for the blind with a worthwhile prize! Could there be a nobler crusade than that of the pioneer of international understanding?

But pioneers need weapons, and the blind cannot master languages without Braille text-books. If there is any sign that a number of adult blind people wish to study languages, even if that number is comparatively small, their needs should be met with the utmost promptitude. What we should like to see is the preparation now, and the publication in Braille at the earliest possible moment, of simple, up-to-date, complete language courses for adults in French, Russian, Spanish and Italian, to be followed by courses in Dutch, Portuguese, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and Polish, and in German when intercourse with Germany is near resumption. That would be a good beginning, especially if the courses could be purchased by the blind at a merely nominal price. Perhaps the procedure could be simplified by the publication of the courses in periodical instalments. This

method might assist learners by helping to regulate their periods of study, and much more so if the parts were edited by someone skilled in instruction by correspondence. That would call for voluntary assistance, and we think the idea might be extended in local districts by enlisting the services of volunteer language instructors who would personally help the learners.

At a time when the State has undertaken many responsibilities towards the blind which were formerly shouldered by voluntary workers, here is a new field for voluntary endeavour. There could be none more in the spirit of these present days when the peoples of the world are yearning for the international understanding which can alone breed peace.

THE EDITOR.

A PASTIME CLUB FOR THE BLIND

THE main object of Clubs for the Blind is to provide a means whereby, blind people whose physical outlet and social intercourse are generally limited within the home, can enjoy all possible activities of mind and body.

Clubs vary according to the demands of the members, the number of trained teachers, and the aptitude of voluntary helpers. They range from the small social gathering to the more ambitious occupational centre, popularly known as a Pastime Club.

This is the record of one such club, not as a bright example of perfection, for we were always very conscious of our failings, but to illustrate some of our strenuous activities, which may be copied or avoided as the reader thinks fit.

The teaching staff enjoyed a welcome break from home visiting and form filling duties, and even though we were usually exhausted at the end of those two feverish hours, we met our colleagues every week and obtained mental stimulation from each other.

Our teaching ability was stretched to breaking point at times, for our members were ambitious. There was basketry for the enthusiasts, knitting for the women gossips, needlework both plain and fancy. Retired workshop men favoured the mat making and stool tables. Deaf old men were occupied in cutting pieces of cloth to stuff toy animals, while on the woodwork table our pupils ranged from a boy in his teens who made cute toys and jig-saw puzzles, to old men of between eighty and ninety years old who were thrilled to the toes when invited to spend the afternoon sand-papering wood.

We had a goodly sprinkling of Jewish people, and as they had invariably been in the tailoring trade at some time during their life, we created a unique needlework table where shrivelled old

men tailors took charge of elderly women pupils. It was a fine sight to see their creative powers let loose on weird looking toy animals. One man's ardour was so great that he arrived one day with a sack full of mangy fur, remnants acquired during his former days as a furrier. We surmised fairly correctly that this sack had reposed undisturbed for a considerable time in dubious surroundings, so we did not favour it for making toys for children. How we sorted and searched that sack, packed it with carbon balls and then decided to stop the output of toys until Abraham had been successfully diverted to some other occupation.

Our pupils seldom sought rest, and their demands always exceeded the helping hands available. Even so, we filled our cupboards at lightning speed. It would test a cleverer imagination than most to put a fair price on the varied assortment of our finished goods. If we could get the article completely made at the Club it simplified matters, although even then we were often at the mercy of voluntary talent; but so eager were our members to keep busy that many articles were smuggled home to be finished(?) Short of searching everyone, or making rules we were not numerous enough to keep, this could not always be avoided. Thus we found ourselves possessing cardigans with one sleeve longer than the other; needlework completed in tacking stitches; toys with the limbs stitched on at extraordinary angles. Our biggest nightmare was knitted swabs. Clean and dirty, of every shape and size, with stitches looped and dropped; and of a quantity so numerous that in quiet moments we wondered how on earth so much material was let loose at the Club.

In addition to all this hand work, we ran jumble sales to rid our cupboards of sundry white elephants, and dispose of our cast-off clothing. All bargains ranged from sixpence to

one shilling and the proceeds purchased additional dainties for the Christmas party teas.

We had penny raffles for popular articles in the stock cupboard; monthly sales of work; and, of course, our Annual Sale, a magic date to which eyes and fingers were directed for months in advance.

We held a thrift club, with contributions ranging from one penny upwards, and were officially recognised by the G.P.O. as a savings centre, although the bank was always empty at Christmas and outing times.

Our summer excursions were planned during the cold days of February because our members liked to save a little money each week. By the time the great day arrived we had usually managed to collect all the fare monies, allotted seats so that friends could go gay together, and dealt with a multitude of queries which beset a party of a hundred blind people. For example, could John take his boy of six years as guide? Could Mary have a seat near the first aid outfit because she was subject to fits when excited? Could Bill take his accordion? Could Elizabeth please not be seated at the same table as Mrs. B., who was so rude, and always put food in her pockets? Martha had never ridden in a motor coach before, but would come if she could travel in the same coach as "her lady." Grannie is, persuaded to go adventuring for the day although she is "scared stiff of them motors."

Occasionally we planned social afternoons, to ease the pressure on bulging stock cupboards and to give the teaching staff a little relaxation. These afternoons revive many painful memories of lecturers and concert parties who arrived within a few minutes of closing time, or sometimes never appeared at all; of enthusiastic voluntary workers who wanted to teach part songs and classics to a motley assembly of elderly Cockneys and Jews; of developing the home talent in our midst and sitting in ghastly sweats while "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life" was sung in a cracked voice and three complete breaks, and other folk, taken on recommendation, who told offensive stories or recited poems in a whisper!

We introduced community singing, with "Two Little Girls in Blue," "Daisy," and other relics of the side-whisker days. At the Christmas festival we sang carols, with the Jewish people joining in as lustily as the others.

We planned games which old blind folk could play without moving from their seats. Cake guessing, blowing up balloons, passing the stick to music, and other variations. We even persuaded a few younger folk to dance when we

were fortunate enough to find a good pianist.

Yet, for all these activities, we still found it necessary to deal with bad influences. Shady characters would get together and demoralise really decent people who were snared into conversation with them. Confirmed cynics sought to persuade newcomers that the meeting was sheer waste of time. Comparison of incomes provided such violent arguments and repercussions that we sometimes despaired of ever finding a contented Club member again. Even the most docile found a thrill in discovering the incomes of their neighbours. Often disillusioned, we took immense care to introduce newcomers to the "right people," but this was not always successful. We would find a former beggar, now retired, telling us how shocked he was at the motley crowd, and an insignificant little man asking artlessly whether we considered community meetings were "constructional or destructional in their effects?"

So, having sketched the outline of our activities in that unwieldy club in the slums, here are some diary notes illustrating the cares of the club leader.

"One 'power' has just brightly suggested men be taught to knit their own socks, and that knitted bed blankets might be welcomed by all members. Cannot imagine the results of first suggestion, but have vivid pictures of the paradise for vermin which knitted blankets would provide!"

"Our new idea of women making their own underwear is not too successful. Mary, always ambitious, wanted 'two of everything—shimmies, drawers and calico petticoats.' I cut them out rather dubiously after a vain hunt for patterns in the local shops. Inspiration mainly gained after close inspection of the washing lines of ancient women. They fitted fairly well, but Mary, in a hurry, took them home to sew. She produced them the following week, tacked as I thought. Mary proudly corrected me, they were finished. Warned her in vain to sew tighter and smaller, for there was room for a finger between each seam edge, hems were botched and folded, and the sleeves were set at an acute angle. However, Mary's accomplishment suited her very well, she wears the articles at club, and is not too proud to lift her skirts to exhibit them to other needlework aspirants. My last appeal was from the heart—not to send them to the laundry. Alas, Mary has now moved away and the only task left for me is to try and collect the cash balance still owing for material."

"Held our bulb competition last week. Six pathetic exhibits, some with leaves two feet long and all the blooms faded. Prize of 5s. won

by our youngest member who intends buying a shirt. All pleased, for he's a grand entertainer on the accordion. Condescending lady local high-light presents awards, and asks for more exhibits at the local flower show! Can imagine enthusiastic judge awaiting blind exhibitors to arrive by the dozen. General weakness of exhibits dates from last autumn when a voluntary organiser of flower shows offered the bulbs from a platform in our large hall. It needed more than a feminine voice to penetrate the many deaf ears present. Growing instructions were given, but the only one I heard was that they should not be planted upside down! "What are they saying?" queried one deaf man into his neighbour's deaf ear. "Not sure, mate, but I think they're talking about bombs..."

Just another little misunderstanding for the home visitor to correct...

And so our Club went on each week, leaving us exhausted wrecks at the end of those two hectic hours. We listened to all kinds of home troubles as we went about teaching, and were introduced to sundry friends and neighbours who came as guides. We found these people most useful when tea time arrived, and there was often a small army of tray bearers, exchanging the card discs which indicated that members had paid their tea money on entrance, for tea and triangles of cut cake in the saucers. Admittedly our tea arrangements were somewhat crude, but we were at the mercy of resident caretakers who 'catered' at so much per cup.

A most unsatisfactory arrangement, for our members had their likes and dislikes. One wanted it sweet, another without sugar, while yet another liked it very weak. Alas, it all came out of the same urn, and sweetened, and those who did not like it refreshed themselves with cups of cold water,

Our party teas were on a far more lavish scale. Then we invited Messrs. Lyons to supply tarts and chocolate cakes by the six dozen. We even went to paper serviettes on that day. Later, during the concert (if it arrived), we dispensed minute bags of sweets, carefully counted by us in advance, to the ladies, while each man was given two cigarettes.

No doubt we could have procured more generous etceteras if we had pleaded for alms, but although our club was in one of the poorest districts and our members really needy, we had our pride. We hated sentimental pity from people with loud voices who liked to patronise (with the Press in attendance) and then related to their friends: "My dear, it was so marvellous to see those poor things. Of course, my husband provided the cigarettes—must do something to cheer them up—if only I'd thought I'd have taken some flowers too—crowded out in the garden—still I suppose they couldn't appreciate them. My dear, just imagine a crowd of people all helplessly blind... just too awful for words, isn't it?"

We should never have agreed with them!

A. K.

IN THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

By JOHN NOLAN.

THE brilliance of the sun's radiance is nought to me but a hurtful, murky glare, and it is a relief when I escape from its searing dazzle into dark or shaded places. Yet, even so, there is no more self-seeking prayer I more fervently pray than the one that Almighty God will grant me throughout the remainder of my life the vividly remembered vision of the sun's inspiring magnificence at its rising and its setting; for surely its beauty can only be transcended by that of its Creator.

I know that you, too, for whom the sun has ceased to be the delight of your eyes, can still be entranced by memories of past sunshine scenes, or as some friend reads or tells of its rising or of its setting. This being so, we can never be as blind to the sublime spectacle as some impoverished souls of men and women with eyesight, who view the manifestation as un-

emotionally as they do the lighting and extinguishing of the match with which they light their cigarette.

It is pitiable temerity, I know, for one lacking the first essential to try and describe a sunset within whose glow I have recently sat; but if you will bear with me, I promise not to ape Francis Thompson or other famed writers who have essayed so impossible a task.

With the sight in my eyes in bygone years, I have seen the arching of the sun over seas and lands both sides of the Equator. Jimmy, my thoughtful, fifteen-year-old guide, has seldom seen the sun except at street ends or over the roofs of the large city of his birth and up-bringing. For the first time in his life he is holidaying with me at a coast farm nearly two hundred miles from his home. The nearest road worthy the name is two miles distant. We

had arrived late in the evening, been given an all-home-produced supper, and then we went from the landside of the lofty sandhills out on to the vast, deserted strand.

Exclaiming, "O Lord!" the boy stood, held by his first sight of that half-a-world of water, the Atlantic Ocean. Its heaving, blue immensity had fascinated and awed him, I think, as it had done with me at about his age, those long years back, on my pioneering journey to the sea from my London home.

The tide was making well on its way to full, leaving only occasional narrow stretches of unflooded strand at the base of the steep ramp of the shingle bank guarding the foundations of the dunes from erosion. We walked about a quarter of a mile of such a stretch of strand, when the boy, gradually slowing his pace, stood again, gazing for a long, silent while seawards into the sun. At length, murmuring shyly, more to himself than to me, he said: "God is going to bed." He was not posing or being babyishly juvenile—he's a boy scout, besides being far too city-sophisticated by "fourpenny rush" cinemas, for that. No, I feel that it was the soul in him beholding a revelation; a scene akin to the Transfiguration of his Scripture reading. The fast-flowing tide purling over our shoes, caused us to climb the shingle above highwater mark. We sat down there; I shielding my eyes from the blaze.

"Would you like to tell me what you see?" I asked Jimmy.

"I wish I could, but I couldn't! I don't know the words to use for such gaudious grandeur! It's like . . . like . . . the Exposition and Benediction of God!" (The boy is a Catholic, hence his choice of comparison.) He proceeded, trying to describe, trying well and bravely, this greatest of all functions. As he speaks, I picture the Sacrament of the sky, low in the western dome, poised above the altar wrought of its glowing glory. The four Cardinal angels from the north and south and east and west, have swung from their thuribles the adorning vapours that halo the Orb and float as tapestry cumulus of heavenly hues and wreathings within the precincts of its sanctuary. And over all the leagues unto the shore, the masons of the light have paved and tessellated the surface of the deep with glittering nave and aisles. And imagining thus, let us pray that every soul of the heroes so harshly drowned and interred within the watery vaults during the past five deadly years, have long ere this ascended to their eternal reward along the paths of glory which lead beyond the grave to God. And imagining still, may we wonder if those heroic

souls are not this moment's sacristans and acolytes aiding the Lord in unfolding His majesty on and over the element of their mortal travail.

The boy is speaking insistently: "Look! Look! The sun is standing on the water! Oh, Lord, see how it has spread its golden-red light everywhere over the sea! Oh, Lord, it's grand! I do wish you could see it for yourself!"

His gentle, youthful earnestness is endearing, so I hasten to tell him I have seen many-a-many such sun-settings. I am sorry, though, that the lad has no kindred companion to see the sight with him.

There is not a word from him now. The Sun is a *fortissimo* of shining splendour that has swelled from refulgent *crescendo* to a *Te Deum* of glory and praise to the Host of this visible heaven. And as it slowly, slowly passes below the reredos of the glorified horizon one is made reverently aware of its meaning and on whose behalf it enlightens and blesses "*Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus.*"

For hours after the sun had gone, its great, rayed nimbus and the tiers of choir clouds were suffused with psalms of chromatic melody and harmony in tones and tints of infinite compass, proclaiming across the sky of the world: *Adoremus in aeternum*. Then in calm *rallantandos* and *legato diminuendo*, the light and glow were taken from the sky and sea by the spirit sacristans and acolytes, and they flew home to heaven. This hemisphere of our world rolled on to its side to the work or fitful sleep of a summer night in war.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Teaching Braille to Adults

SIR—I have read with much interest Mr. Loch-head's article on *Teaching Adults to Read Braille* in your issue of 15th November. While his methods are no doubt excellent for readers who can have daily lessons, few adults are in that happy position. Weekly lessons along these lines would be rather tedious to an adult anxious to read as soon as possible.

I should like to point out that the supply of books in Grade I Braille is too limited and circumscribed in taste for adult readers.

If they cannot advance beyond Grade I, Moon is preferable.

Yours, etc.,

H. G.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the deaths of :—

Miss Lily Bell, who passed away in her sleep at Hove, on December 31st, 1944, and was laid to rest, as she wished, in the grave of her sister, Mrs. Mary Emma Antill, at Hove Cemetery. Miss Bell first went to a School for the Blind in Brighton at the age of nine and remained there from 1876 to 1881. She then went to the Royal Normal College, and during the following six years was trained as a teacher, afterwards teaching in the College for a year and a term. Then, on the advice of Sir Francis Campbell, she went to an American Training College at Framingham, near Boston, where she continued her training quite successfully although the College was one for seeing students. When her training was completed she returned to the Royal Normal College where she was on the teaching staff for 38 years, retiring at Christmas, 1928. She had a most endearing nature, and her many pupils knew that in her they had a real friend. She was particularly interested in the provision of adequate Braille text-books, and from July, 1924, to February, 1929, was a valuable member of the Publications Subcommittee of the National Institute for the Blind.

Miss Louisa Turner Bloxam, the youngest daughter of the late Richard Bloxam, of Eltham Court, Kent, Taxing Master of the Supreme Court of Judicature, in her 88th year. Blind people owe much to her initiative and imagination. Towards the end of the last century, the great idea came to her of producing a weekly newspaper in Braille type. With the collaboration of Miss E. R. Scott, of Shere, Surrey, the *Weekly Summary for the Blind* made its first appearance on June 1st, 1892. A French newspaper took precedence of it by a few years, but it was the first newspaper for the blind to be produced in the English language. Miss Scott was responsible for the letterpress; Miss Bloxam undertook the production and business side of the undertaking. For the first 22 years the Editors stereotyped their own brass sheets with a steel prodder and a hammer. This work was generally done by Miss Bloxam at Eltham Court. The domestic clothes mangle was pressed into service and the dripping wet paper sheets, inserted between the double brass sheets were passed through it and then spread out to dry. Every Wednesday morning the paper was put together sheet by sheet, enclosed in a stamped

and addressed cover, rolled and tied. The sack full of these neat rolls carried on the shoulders of the gardener to what was then the village Post Office of Eltham was as it were a sack full of light going into the dark lives of blind people all over the world. In 1914, the printing and distribution passed into the hands of the National Institute for the Blind in London. The paper had its dramatic moments. There was the occasion when after being registered as a newspaper at the Stationery Office the British Museum wrote and asked for a specimen of every copy that had been issued since its inception, a request that was fulfilled with some difficulty. In 1906 the *Braille Mail* appeared and for a short time the circulation of the *Weekly Summary* was adversely affected, but the two papers continued their good work side by side, for what appealed to one reader did not suit another. Copies of the *Weekly Summary* went all over the world; not only to distant parts of the British Empire but to America, France, Germany and Rumania as well. In 1919, the Editors received the Government Grant for Blind Literature, and the price was reduced from 2½d. a copy to 1½d. post free. Before this Christmas cards and calendars with raised pictures and Braille mottoes had been printed, the profits from which helped to pay the expenses of the paper. When the present war was imminent in 1939 the Editors decided that owing to paper shortage and labour difficulties the time had come to cease publication, and the last issue appeared on September 8th of that year. The balance of money in hand was given to St. Dunstan's for the purchase of Braille Books. During the 47 years of the existence of the paper the Editors gave their services voluntarily.

Her work on the *Weekly Summary* brought Miss Bloxam into touch with many blind people, and her quick sympathy, readiness to spend herself in the service of others, unflinching patience and sense of humour enabled her to help more people than will ever be known. Many who never knew her personally had cause to be deeply grateful to her. She loved much and was much loved and her name should not be allowed to drop out of the annals of those who have worked to ameliorate the conditions of life of blind people in this country.

Miss Julia Kingsley, of Harpenden, aged 80, for many years local representative of the Hertfordshire Society for the Blind. Her work

was greatly valued, and the blind to whom she gave her services were very fond of her. She retired from the work in 1935.

The Rev. Henry Every, of Torquay, aged 82. As Hon. Secretary of the Devon County Association for the Blind, he was well known to blind welfare workers throughout the county. He was keenly interested in young people and education, and was awarded the M.B.E. for his work in connection with juvenile welfare. He was identified in recent years with many social service activities in Torquay, where he took up permanent residence in 1924. The Archdeacon of Totnes, in his address at the funeral service, said "We all learned to love him and to understand him. He was never thinking of himself, but was always concerned with the highest and best." Mr. Every was a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind from July, 1931, to October, 1934, and served during most of that period on its Education and Research Committee.

Sir Ernest Bird, of Messrs. Bird and Bird,

Solicitors, of Gray's Inn, and President of the Law Society in 1943-44. His loss is a grievous one to the National Institute for the Blind, as he had for many years not only been its Solicitor but also one of its wisest counsellors and staunchest friends. In the legal world his name stood high. In legal business the Institute could draw both on his own wisdom and on the wide resources of the large and important firm of which he was the working head. *The Times* Obituary described him rightly as "A man of courtesy and charm. In appearance and manner he might have been the ideal family solicitor of fiction and drama." He will be remembered with gratitude and affection not only by those who went to him for professional help, but by the many more who were honoured by his personal friendship. He had no liking for the limelight, but it should be recorded here that, though he never appeared in any public way as one who was concerned with the Welfare of the Blind, he in his own quiet and effective way did much to advance their interests.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Herbert Quin, M.P.—In our note last month on the election of Mr. Herbert Quin, blind chartered accountant and barrister, to Parliament as member for Queen's University, Belfast, we inadvertently gave the impression that Mr. Herbert was therefore a member of the House of Commons in London. This, of course, is not so. Mr. Quin is now a member of the Northern Ireland Parliament, and is the first blind man to be elected to it.

Blind Man Takes Degree at Sheffield.—Mr. Edward Kaulfuss, of Derby, aged 41, enjoys the distinction of being the first blind student who in the history of Sheffield University has obtained a degree. He has just secured a general degree of B.A. in English Social Philosophy and Economics. He became totally blind in 1931, and after starting to learn Braille decided on a scholastic career. He hopes to become a lecturer on adult education. He also has literary leanings; he has written two plays, "The Witch of Moor Ledge," produced in the Children's Hour on the old Midland Regional Station, and "The Gods in the Greenhouse," performed by the Ashbourne Players.

A Fine Come-Back.—Mr. Alfred Lang, a former Lanarkshire policeman, of Carstairs

Junction, lost his sight as the result of wounds received in the North African Campaign in 1943. Last month, on the recommendation of Chief Constable A. N. Keith, he returned to civilian duty as a wireless operator in the Lanarkshire Police radio station. This will involve taking messages in Braille shorthand, transmitting them, and making copies for record purposes on a typewriter.

Splendid Success of Young Blind Organist.—In a former issue attention was drawn to a promising young pupil of the Swiss Cottage School for the Blind, Sidney Bryant, who had previously obtained the A.R.C.O. Diploma and was devoting whole time to the study of music. Optimistic expectation that, under the able tuition of Mr. Sinclair Logan, more would be heard of this young musician has been fully justified. At the recent January Examination he gained the Fellowship Diploma of the Royal College of Organists, sharing with another candidate the "Turpin" Prize. When young Bryant leaves Swiss Cottage at the end of the summer, he is likely to make a mark in the profession he has chosen for his career.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

New Zealand Institute for the Blind.—This Institute is responsible for every aspect of blind welfare in the Dominion. It cares for 35 children in its school, special attention being given to music, musical appreciation and physical training (some excellent photographs of boys and girls at drill and taking part in sports are included); it has a flourishing band and dance bands that take many outside engagements; it has a training centre and workshop, the latter devoted mainly at present to war work, including the making of fenders, hammocks and landing nets; it has a flourishing social club and a large library of books in embossed type and also talking books; and its visitors care for the scattered blind through the country. That its subscriptions and donations last year reached a total of £11,575 is evidence of public confidence in the work that is being done.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

As from 15th January, the hours of business for the Institute's Showroom are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The closing time on Saturdays is at 1 o'clock.

NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS

The National Institute for the Blind has experienced considerable difficulty during the war period in maintaining supplies of apparatus, appliances, games and Braille publications, etc., but it can claim a large measure of success in meeting the reasonable requirements of its numerous customers at home and overseas. Every endeavour will continue to be made to renew stocks, although certain items in the catalogues will not again be available until production can be resumed; there are others the supply of which is limited, and some items, such as Braille machines, can be supplied only after each individual order has been carefully scrutinised to determine the degree of priority. Customers, in the main, fully appreciate these circumstances and accept the Institute's assurance that no effort will be spared to improve the supply position as opportunities permit.

The success of any Mail Order Service depends entirely on the prompt and efficient treatment of customers' orders. Having regard to war conditions the Institute has continued to give good service, but recognises that this has not always been quite up to its pre-war standard, due sometimes to postal and rail transport delays, but more particularly to shortage of experienced staff. In recent months the position has been further complicated by an increase in the volume of orders received, co-incidental with several changes in staff to replace those who have been affected by the Services call-up. In consequence, the work of the Mail Order Department is in arrears, and with a view to enabling the staff to cope with these arrears and the

urgent essential needs of Schools and Institutions for the Blind, the Institute has decided to request its customers, especially private individuals, not to place orders until after April 30th, 1945, unless their needs are such that the sending of an order is imperative. In any event, customers are asked to forward orders at less frequent intervals and to give us what help they can by stating their requirements as clearly and concisely as possible, and by quoting our catalogue numbers, for apparatus and appliances, Braille books and music publications, etc., whenever they can.

The Institute is confident that it can rely on the co-operation of its customers and solicits their forbearance in these exceptional circumstances.

W. MCG. EAGAR,
Secretary General.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRILLE MUSIC.

The prices of the following pieces of music represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production.

		s.	d.
19209.	Arlen, H. Tess's Torch Song, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
19241.	Davies, H. Where the Blue Begins, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
19242.	Jones, I. It Had to be You, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6
19243.	Stept, S. When They ask About You, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	0	6

BRILLE BOOKS.

Blind institutions and blind individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpolated and paper covers.

Fiction:

18729-35.	Gay Galliard, The, by Margaret Irwin.	7 vols.	7s. per vol.	F475.
18316-9.	Twenty Fifth Hour, The, by Herbert Best.	4 vols.	5s. 6d. per vol.	F209.
18958-60.	Frenchman's Creek, by Daphne Du Maurier.	3 vols.	6s. 9d. per vol.	F198.

Fiction—Juvenile:

18954-7.	Missee Lee, by Arthur Ransome.	4 vols.	6s. per vol.	F236.
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Miscellaneous

19172.	Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944.	Pamphlet.	2s. 3d.	E21
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MOON BOOKS.

4731-4742.	Great Expectations, by Charles Dickens.	12 vols.	(Limited Editions.)
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APPARATUS

Change of Prices

The prices of the following articles are increased as from January 18th to prices given:—

Cat. No.	Article.	List Price.	Special price to blind, including Institutions in British Empire.
9038	Millard Pencil Writing Frame, 4to ..	2s. 6d.	1s. 9d.
9039	Millard Pencil Writing Frame, 8vo. ..	2s. 3d.	1s. 6d.
	(as from February 7th, 1945.)		
9064	Arithmetic Type	4s. 6d.	3s. 0d.
	The following is a corrected price:		
9427	Paper Brake Typewriter Backing Sheets in sets of six ..	2s. 0d.	1s. 3d.

**SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN
KNOWLEDGE**

S.P.C.K. House, Northumberland Avenue, London,
W.C.2.

"THE MAN BORN TO BE KING,"

By Dorothy Sayers.

It is hoped that, paper permitting, the Braille
Edition of the last six Plays in this book will be ready
by Easter. They are as follows:—

7. The Light and the Life.
8. Royal Progress.
9. The King's Supper.
10. The Princes and This World.
11. King of Sorrows.
12. The King Comes to His Own.

Each play is 6d. net or two plays can be bound
together (not three as in the first six) in stiffer covers,
1s. net. Numbers 7, 8 9 and 10 are now ready.

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1,

and

NORTHERN BRANCH,
5, St. John Street, Manchester, 3.
ADDITIONS.

Fiction:	Vols.
Alington, C. A. Ten Crowded Hours ..	3
Cooper, Fenimore. Deerslayer ..	9
Davenport, Marcia. Valley of Decision ..	15
Gooden, Barbara. Community Singing ..	3
Gorell, Lord. Murder at Mavington ..	4
Grant, Joan. Lord of the Horizon ..	5
Hosie, Lady. Pool of Ch'ien Lung: A Tale of Modern Peking ..	4
Huges, Dorothy B. Fallen Sparrow ..	4
Innes, Michael. Weight of the Evidence ..	4
Kersh, Gerald. Faces in a Dusty Picture ..	3
Lane, Temple. House of My Pilgrimage ..	4
Lindsay, Philip. Jack Laughs at Locksmiths..	7
Llewellyn, Richard. None but the Lonely Heart	7
Mackail, Denis. Upside Down ..	4
Madariaga, Salvador de. Heart of Jade ..	12
Maugham, Somerset. Razor's Edge ..	6
Oppenheim, E. P. Mr. Mirakel ..	4
Pedler, Margaret. No Gifts from Chance ..	4
Roberts, Denys K. (Editor). Penguin Parade, VI ..	3
Sharp, Margery. Cluny Brown ..	4
Spring, Howard. Hard Facts ..	5
Thorndike, Russell. House of Jeffreys ..	4
Travers, Ben. Rookery Nook ..	4
Vance, Ethel. Reprisal ..	4

Miscellaneous:

Arbuthnot, Joan. More Profit than Gold ..	4
Beveridge, Sir William. Full Employment in a Free Society ..	2
Bowen, Elizabeth. Seven Winters ..	1
Clarke, Tom. Word of an Englishman ..	5
Duguid, Julian. I Am Persuaded ..	6
Frank, Waldo. South American Journey ..	6
Groom, Bernard. Short History of English Words	6
Huxley, Julian. Argument of Blood ..	1
Inge, Dean. Our Present Discontents ..	4
Lehmann, John. Down River: A Danubian Study ..	5
Loyola, Mother Mary. Hail! Full of Grace ..	3
Macdougall, Eleanor. Faith and Fortitude ..	1
Massingham, H. J. Men of Earth ..	3
Matthew, David. British Seamen ..	1
Reitz, Denys. No Outspan ..	6
Saunders, Hilary St. George. Pioneers! O Pio- neers! ..	3

	Vols.
Social Insurance. Part 1 ..	2
Trend, J. B. Civilisation of Spain ..	3
Voyage of the Chelyuskin, 1933-4 ..	7
Zweig, Stefan. World of Yesterday ..	7
Juvenile:	
Barne, Kitty. We'll Meet in England ..	3
Rutley, C. Bernard. Wild Life in the Jungle ..	2
Grade 1:	
Martyr, Weston. South Sea Saga with Lucky Bargess ..	1
Waugh, Alec. Where the Blame Rests with Object Lesson ..	1
Waugh, Alec. Pretty Case for Freud with "Ambition" Bevan ..	1

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS
OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES.** All
home teachers are invited to join the Association.
Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary,
32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Man-
chester, 21.

SCHOOL OF TELEPHONY, CARDIFF.

There are a few vacancies for pupils for a course of
training in Telephony. Subjects include: Braille,
Shorthand, Typewriting and Switch Board Operating.
Course approved by Ministry of Education. Applica-
tions to the Secretary, Cardiff Institute for the Blind,
Longcross Street, Cardiff.

HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1945.

Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified
instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are
invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence
Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal
Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham,
17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by
previous subscribers.

**CITY OF BRADFORD.
BLIND PERSONS ACT COMMITTEE.
OAKHURST HOSTEL.**

Applications are invited for the undermentioned
positions:—

- (a) Matron—Consolidated commencing salary of
£140, rising by annual increments of £10 to £160
per annum, plus emoluments valued at £60 per
annum;
- (b) Assistant Matron/Seamstress—Consolidated com-
mencing wage at the rate of £110, rising by annual
increments of £10 to £130 per annum, plus
emoluments valued at £60 per annum.

The post of Matron is subject to the Local Govern-
ment Superannuation Act, 1937, and to the successful
candidate passing a medical examination; the post of
Assistant Matron is not so subject at the present time,
but may become so later.

Applications, giving full particulars of age, experience,
etc., and accompanied by three recent testimonials
should reach the undersigned not later than Saturday,
February 24th.

N. L. FLEMING,
Town Clerk.

Town Hall,
Bradford.

NORWICH INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Sighted Foreman-Instructor required for the Brush Department. Applicants must be capable of taking charge. Good salary will be paid to fully qualified person. Full details to be submitted to the Secretary of the Institution, 132, Magdalen Street, Norwich, Norfolk, from whom further information may be obtained.

BRISTOL WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of Trades Manager. Details of salary, etc., supplied on request. Service is pensionable under the Institution's Staff Pension Scheme. General knowledge of blind workshop employment, with special reference to Basketry and Mat Making desirable. Duties to commence as early as possible.

Applicants must state age, experience, present position, and salary, and submit copies of three recent testimonials to General Superintendent, Workshops for the Blind, St. George's Road, Bristol, 1, not later than 28th February, 1945.

STOCKPORT INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of female Home Teacher and Visitor of Blind Persons. Candidates must be sighted and hold the Home Teachers' Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind. Applications from non-qualified Home Teachers will also be considered.

Salary for qualified Home Teacher, £156 per annum, rising to £208 per annum, plus Cost of Living Bonus, at present £40 6s. Uncertificated Home Teacher, commencing salary £130 per annum.

Applications stating age, qualifications and experience, accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials should be forwarded so as to be received not later than February 28th, to

The Secretary,
Institute for the Blind,
St. Petersgate,
Stockport.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF WALSALL. ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF STAFFORD WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited from sighted persons not liable for military service and who must have had practical experience of Basketry (a knowledge of Mat-making would be an advantage) for the appointment of General Foreman at the Walsall Workshops for the Blind.

The salary will be on Scale, £230 per annum rising by annual increments of £10 to £260 per annum, commencing according to experience, plus War Bonus (at present £49 8s. per annum). The appointment is a permanent one, and is subject to the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination. Applications, stating age, full particulars of experience, etc., and accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, should reach the undersigned not later than February 26th, 1945, in envelopes endorsed "General Foreman, Workshops for the Blind." Candidates must disclose in writing whether to their knowledge they are related to any member or officer of the Council. Canvassing, whether directly or indirectly, is strictly prohibited.

W. STALEY BROOKES,
Clerk to the Joint Management
Committee for the Blind.

The Council House,
Walsall.
February 2nd, 1945.

Applications are invited for the position of sighted Female Supervisor for Knitting Department, with experience in round and flat machine and ability to cut out and complete garments. The Department has nine blind knitters, an electric overlocking machine, and modern equipment. Commencing Salary £3 10s. per week, plus 18s. per week War Bonus. Applications stating age and experience with three testimonials should be sent to the undersigned. Alfred E. Ledger, Superintendent and Secretary, Warrington, Widnes and District Society for the Blind, 4, Museum Street, Warrington.

WEST SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL.

Appointment of Home Teacher and Visitor for the Blind. Applications are invited for the above whole-time appointment (women) the duties of which will be to visit the blind in the county in their own homes, to teach them as far as possible to read Braille or Moon type, to instruct them in simple pastime occupations, and generally to assist in promoting the social welfare of the blind. Preference will be given to applicants holding the Certificate of Home Teaching of the College of Teachers of the Blind. Salary £175 per annum, rising to £200 per annum, plus cost-of-living bonus and travelling allowance according to County Scale for the time being. Particulars of appointment and forms of application may be obtained from the undersigned, by whom applications accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials should be received as soon as possible. Canvassing in any form, direct or indirect, will disqualify.

L. G. H. MUNSEY,

Clerk of the County Council.

Shire Hall, Bury St. Edmunds.

January 26th, 1945.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Appointment of Home Teachers of the Blind.

Applications are invited for the positions of sighted female Home Teachers of the Blind, for duty in the Administrative County Area adjacent to Manchester, or in Bacup and Rawtonstall.

If the person appointed is over 40 years of age the appointment will be temporary and for the duration of the war only.

Certificated—Salary £156 per annum, rising by four annual increments of £13 per annum to £208 per annum, plus War Bonus at present £40. 6s per annum, together with travelling expenses.

Uncertificated—Salary £130 per annum, plus War Bonus, at present £40. 6s. per annum, together with travelling expenses.

Previous experience in Blind Welfare an advantage, but not essential.

Previous service as a certificated Home Teacher with a Local Authority or an Agency for the Blind will rank for service on the salary scale.

The successful applicants will be required to pass a medical examination, and to contribute to the County Council, Superannuation Scheme. The appointments will be subject to one calendar month's notice by either side.

Applications in applicant's own handwriting, accompanied by copies of not more than two recent testimonials, stating age, experience and qualifications, must be received by the County Medical Officer of Health, County Offices, Preston, not later than Monday, February 26th, 1945.

R. H. ADCOCK,

Clerk of the County Council.

County Offices,
Preston.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

VOL. XXIX. No 339.

MARCH 15TH, 1945.

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THIS PITY

By CHARLES JAMES

THE difficulties of the blind are many ; their greatest difficulty is to convince the sighted world that though they may have lost their sight they are still normal persons, able to act and think for themselves. The blind are the most misunderstood people in the world ; merely because the ordinary person will just not take the trouble to think but will take the line of least resistance and resort to pity. Time and time again, we have said that we, the blind, do not want pity ; all we need is just plain, commonsense, practical help, when required.

What are one's reactions to the loss of sight ? It is difficult to say ; for my part, I do not remember any immediate reactions although, at the time, I knew that my sight was irrevocably lost to me. I spent about four weeks in hospital and was treated with nothing but kindness, too much kindness in fact, I thought. Nurses would offer to fill and light my pipe ; they showed that they were anxious to do any little thing for me ; I'm afraid at times, I resented this help a little. Here was I, a grown man, and here were people offering to fill my pipe, a thing I had done for years !

For my first mid-day meal in that hospital I was given, instead of a knife and fork, a dessert-spoon. I was a little indignant and called the nurse in charge of the ward.

"Why have I been given a spoon instead of a knife and fork, Nurse ?" I asked.

"Well, we didn't think you would be able to use a knife and fork now," she replied.

Didn't think I could use a knife and fork after all these years ! Is this part of being blind then ? I asked myself. Great heavens ! Here was I, apart from the accident I had just sustained to my eyes, perfectly fit, yet these people imagined that I had suddenly been rendered helpless. Mark you, I very much appreciated their offers of help, but they were making it plain to me that I was now blind, that I could no longer help myself ; that I was now almost incapable, in fact.

I had many such instances of this during my stay in hospital. I remember one day a nurse noticed me take my pipe from the top of the locker she was cleaning ; her offer to fill it being refused, perhaps a little too impatiently, I took my petrol-lighter from my pyjama pocket and lit up.

"I think you're awfully clever," said my nurse.

"Why?" I queried.

"Well," replied she, "anyone would think you were able to see, the way in which you fill and light your pipe."

I made some incoherent remark about baby talk which she fortunately did not catch. She had thought me clever! Ye gods! Clever because I had sufficient intelligence to be able, with my eyes shut, to do things which I had always done with my eyes open.

When I came out of hospital it was even worse; no matter what I did I was clever!

I have known myself to enter the room of a friend's house where a number of people have been hitherto chatting and laughing, but, as soon as I have opened the door, there is an immediate hush, a lugubrious air pervades the atmosphere. I feel that every eye is upon me, I am made to feel it; naturally, it is not meant, it is just that they feel sorry for and pity me. I am given the most comfortable arm-chair in the room, and they perhaps wonder why I smile. Of course I'm smiling, haven't I got the best chair in the room? In the old days I had to be content with what I could be spared; it certainly would not be the best chair, and by the fire-side at that. Here am I, perfectly fit and normal, yet I am treated as an invalid. I think it is the others who are to be pitied for their lack of understanding. It is about time that we were treated as ordinary human beings and not as something liable to break in half immediately we are touched.

It is the same if anyone helps me across the road; they will take my arm. Take it? No, they simply grab it, as though I were going to run away, and when we get to the opposite kerb, I am literally hoisted on to the path. How helpless I am made to feel again. A touch on the sleeve, a "Right-ho, there's the kerb in front of you," is all I need, yet because I cannot see I am supposed to have lost all powers of imagination. Unfortunately, I speak against the greater proportion of would-be helpers.

I well remember some years ago, before my sight had been destroyed, staying at the little seaside town of Wimereux in France. I had made friends with an English-speaking French taxi-driver. We used to discuss many things, from politics to the various types of pleasure our two countries enjoyed best. It was during one of our many visits to a local café that I saw where the French are advanced in their treatment of blind people. We were seated at one of the tables when the door opened and in walked a blind man, obviously well known. I should not have known that this man could not see had not my friend Henri remarked, "Ah, here comes old Léon, my blind friend." The man made straight for the little bar. He was immediately greeted by his associates and, according to custom, began shaking hands all round, I being included. He

went back to the bar, knowing from apparent long practice just where he was. Obviously his wants were known, for a glass of *vin blanc* was placed in front of him, and he began to chat with those around him. There was no case of inferiority complex against this man. Why should there be? He was not made to feel blind; although he had lost his sight, he was treated as a normal person; no one went up to him and offered him a chair, he would probably have found one for himself had he wanted it, or he would have asked someone to find him one; but no, he wanted to stand against the bar as his friends were doing. I turned to my friend Henri and said, "You wouldn't think that fellow was blind, would you? He seems quite normal."

Henri laughed. "Normal!" said he, "of course, he's normal, he's only lost his sight."

I must admit here, I had never come in contact with blind people to any extent. I, of course, had seen many blind people and, like the majority of folks in this country, had pitied and felt sorry for them. Oh yes! I too had misunderstood them.

Léon afterwards, at Henri's invitation, came and sat at our table. My French was not too good but with the help of Henri we had quite a long chat. I found Léon a very interesting man to talk and listen to. I left that café with a different conception of the blind.

French people do not pity the blind, they are too practical-minded to do so. In my own case, I have known the time when, on going down the High Street in my home town, dozens of people whom I had known would give me a greeting. Since losing my sight I have gone down that same High Street and not one person has spoken to me. Why? An acquaintance told a friend of mine that he had seen me out but had not liked to speak to me as he would not know what to say. You see, it's just pity again. According to these people, I am not now normal; little wonder we, as a nation, are not understood; no wonder other nations consider us haughty; of course, it is not haughtiness on our part, it is that we, on the whole, are a reserved and reticent race. Unfortunately for blind persons this reserve in us is apt to be very much misunderstood. It is a strange thing, but most people who have dealings with blind persons have a knack of saying just the wrong thing. One thing I hate is when being shown an article, they will say "Feel this"; one is instantly reminded of the fact that one must now feel and not see; why not say "Have a look at this"? I abhor the use of the word "clever" being used for doing a thing which any person could do with their eyes closed. Take typing, for instance. Typists are taught to

type with the keyboard covered: when striking the keyboard, they are as blind as we. Why therefore, are we clever? Another thing I would like to de-bunk, the general belief that if one loses one faculty one is compensated by another. Nonsense! What blind people do is learned by long practice and patience. I remember on one occasion during a demonstration of what the blind were capable of doing I, as having learned shorthand typewriting, had to show my prowess. There were several of us trainees in the room at the time, all doing different work. There was quite a large audience of sight-seers gathered round so that we could show them how clever we were! Standing directly behind me were a couple of women who evidently had their eyes focussed on myself and what I was doing. As I was typing my shorthand notes, one woman remarked to the other, "How clever! It's amazing what they can do, isn't it?"

"Yes," replied the second. "Yes, it's wonderful! You see what they lose in one way they are compensated for in another."

Anyone would have thought they were speaking of an article of furniture instead of about myself. Perhaps I was not feeling in a good mood; at any rate I turned round to where they were standing and said:

"Pardon me, but what you are watching me do is not due to the fact that I have had something given me in place of what I have lost. What I am now able to do has been brought about through my having been taught it, and, what is more important still, due to damned hard work and perseverance."

Judging by their silence these women must have looked at each other and thought, good heavens! It's talking! It's human! Anyway, they said nothing to me and must have walked away for I heard nothing more of them.

I am afraid these two good women must have thought me rude, but what I had said was the truth. We do not gain another faculty. Speaking for myself, I know only too well that anything I can do has meant long hours of practice.

Further. Why must so many stupid people think that, because we are blind, we must necessarily be deaf as well? I went with a friend to a local hotel some short while ago; the bar was a little crowded and my friend suggested that we stand back a little. Presently, a well-meaning but stupid fellow came and shouted in my ear: "Here you are, here's a chair for you." I quietly but firmly told him that I was not deaf but could hear quite well. Of course, by this man's unnecessary shouting I was made the cynosure of all eyes; I knew, I felt it, that sudden silence again.

On my return to work in my new capacity as telephonist I was greeted the first day by one of the Firm's Directors. He came up and shook hands with me.

"I'm very glad to see you here," he said, "I wish you jolly good luck. There's only one thing however; you must not think that, because you cannot see, you are going to get away with too many mistakes. You are a trained telephonist; I shall expect you to do your work thoroughly, just the same as any other person working here."

I knew why he had spoken those words. This Director knew how I felt now that I had lost my sight. He knew that there was certain to be that inferiority complex. He had wanted me to feel that I was as normal as anyone else and that was his way of saying it; unfortunately, he is one of a minority.

"I consider you fellows the eighth wonder of the world" was said to me once by a man who was sitting at a table next to where a few of us trainees were sitting in a local pub. I asked him his reason for thinking this.

"Well," he replied, "you're always so blessed happy, always singing or whistling, I can't understand it."

No, I suppose it is very difficult for the average person to understand why, instead of being at the limbo of our existence, we are quite cheerful. Perhaps we know that although we may not be able to enjoy life in the way we used to, there are so many compensations which the average sighted person will never know.

EMPIRE NEWS

Dadar School for the Blind, Bombay.—We learn from Mr. Halder, Principal of the School, that through the kindness of Dr. Mehta, Acting Director of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, three blind boys have been given employment, side by side with the seeing, in a toy factory, forming part of the Community Centre of the Ratan Tata Trusts. They are proving so satisfactory that they are to be employed "on regular salaries comparable to those of the seeing."

Gaelic in Braille.—The Gaelic text of the new course of Irish lessons from Radio Eireann, "Listen and Learn," by Aindrias O. Muimhneacháin, is being printed in Braille by the Irish Association for the Blind, through the courtesy of the author and the publishers, the Educational Co. of Ireland, Ltd. The lessons will appear in serial form. The first seven are now ready, and copies may be obtained by Braille readers from the Association free of charge.

HOME NEWS

Generosity Towards Blinded Boy.—A 13-year-old Hatfield boy, David Wilson, who was recently blinded and is now being trained at America Lodge, one of the National Institute's Homes of Recovery, is to benefit through the generosity of his schoolmates, teachers, and the Hertfordshire Constabulary. Mr. B. H. Oliver, headmaster of the school attended by the boy, opened a fund at St. Audrey's Church School, which raised £35. Members of the Hertfordshire Constabulary also subscribed to the fund, now standing at £170, which is to be put in trust for David.

Prevention and Treatment of Blindness in Scotland.—Mr. Beattie inquired in the House of Commons last month whether the Secretary of State for Scotland had in view any extension of facilities for the prevention and treatment of blindness among the civilian population by amendment of the Prevention and Treatment of Blindness (Scotland) Act, 1938, or otherwise. Mr. Johnston replied that provision for prevention and treatment of blindness had hitherto been made by Scottish local authorities, in varying measures, as part of their maternity and child welfare, school health, tuberculosis, and other services. A few authorities exercised their powers under the Act of 1938 to extend such provision to persons outside the scope of these special services. In certain areas also voluntary hospitals provided valuable facilities, and voluntary societies for the blind had done most useful work. As part of the National Health Service, it was contemplated that every person would have access, either through his general practitioner or through an appropriate local clinic service or otherwise, to all necessary specialist and hospital facilities required for all purposes, including those for the prevention and treatment of blindness.

Blind Man's Ball Game.—A writer in the *Yorkshire Evening Post* who has lately seen blind teams from Leeds and Bradford playing handball describes it as follows:—

Teams are six a side, and the game is played with a felt-covered cane ball containing sleigh-bells to enable the players to locate it. The game is amazingly fast, and the deftness of passing and accuracy of shooting are uncanny. An Army corporal who joined in a practice match had to retire exhausted at the interval. Hard knocks are frequent, but are taken in good part and seem to add to the enjoyment,

The Leeds team have played against many fully-sighted sides, and have not been beaten. A victory which gave them great satisfaction was gained over a team from the institute's sighted staff. The sighted team included W. L. Desmond, the New Zealand and ex-Leeds international R.L. footballer.

The Leeds team is ready to meet any blind or sighted side. Rules are much as in Association football, but a sighted team must include a blind goalkeeper, to be provided by the institute club.

Blindness or Deafness?—A discussion in the *Yorkshire Post* on whether total blindness or total deafness is the greater handicap has brought in several opinions. Mrs. Maud F. Reynard, of Lingcroft, near York, unhesitatingly names blindness as the greater handicap, "trying though deafness may often be." She writes: "I speak from personal experience, having been badly bombed last year in my Southern England flat, which was rendered uninhabitable by a V-bomb, and I had a very narrow escape from perishing altogether in the ruins. . . . There is one thing I am thankful for, and that is my eyesight. My hearing has been greatly impaired by the disaster, but thank God my eyesight has been spared, and I am still able to enjoy the beauties of nature. . . . One can live in oneself, and find solace and happiness in so many things, more indeed than one can count. But to be deaf, and unable to hear general conversation and often bickerings and sharpened exhibitions of temper—that surely may often be a blessing in disguise. . . . Deafness may be a nuisance, it is true, in many ways, but to be blind would be infinitely worse.

Mr. Leo C. David, of The Limes, Great Ayton, votes the other way. He came to the conclusion, during the last war, that he would rather be struck blind than stone deaf. "When one has seen, one has memories, and sounds recall those memories. The gurgling of a babbling brook, the song of a bird, the cry of children playing—all these evoke a picture. A blind man can go to the theatre and thoroughly enjoy the music and jokes; he can enjoy the inestimable privilege of hearing music, and the boon of human conversation. What has a deaf man got to compensate him for all that? Imagine sitting in a room full of people and knowing they are talking, but not hearing a

sound. Imagine walking along a busy street and seeing cars, buses, trams, lorries and everything that goes to make up a busy street, and seeing it all as on a silent screen without a sound of any sort."

The King and Queen Watch Blind Workers.—During a visit this month to Napier's factory in Liverpool, the King and Queen saw a number of blind and partially blind men at work. One of them was presented to Their Majesties.

Sports Club for the Blind.—With the approach of spring, the Sports Club for the Blind is looking forward with keen anticipation to resuming its rowing and rambling activities. In the meantime, dances continue to be held, and dates have been arranged on two Saturday evenings, April

7 and May 5. The dances will be held in the Queen Mary Hall Y.W.C.A., Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1, one of the best dance floors in the south of England. The Embassy Band will be in attendance, and in the circumstances the price of admission, 2s., can only be regarded as nominal.

The Club will be delighted to welcome any reader and friend who may wish to attend. First dance 6-45 p.m.

Full membership of the Club can be secured on payment of a yearly subscription of 2s. 6d., and the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. W. Kitchen, of 8, Strathmore Gardens, Finchley, London, N.3, will be delighted to hear from anyone interested.

The Club must be ready for peace conditions, and a healthy membership will be a good send-off.

BLIND FACTORY WORKERS

National and Regional Figures

Figures supplied to the National Institute for the Blind by regional and local agencies show a national total of 1718 blind factory workers. This figure does not include telephonists, short-hand-typists, messengers, canteen workers and placements which failed at the start. The total certainly understates the actual position, as a number of agencies did not answer the questionnaire on which it was based.

Regional figures are :—

Northern Counties Association ..	568
Southern Regional Association ..	880
Western Counties Association ..	62
Welsh Regional Association ..	52

In addition, a total of 156 Ex-Servicemen were placed by St. Dunstan's.

Activities of N.I.B. Placement Section

Since October 1943 the Section has placed 360 blind workers in factories, with the co-operation of local agencies and of the Ministry of Labour. 216 of these placements were in the L.C.C. area. In recent months, at the request of the local agencies, the Section has worked intensively in the following areas: Lincoln, Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Swansea, and the greater part of the Western Counties Association area.

As a result of this work 44 new factory jobs have been proved suitable for blind workers in the following industries: light engineering, heavy engineering (iron foundry), radio industry, cigarette manufacture, chocolate manufacture, leather industry, mineral waters, potted meat

and fish industry, tinned and bottled food industry, cheese processing, glazed tile manufacture, flower-pot making, corset manufacture, electrical engineering, and the printing trade.

At the request of a local employer, and with his financial support, a special investigation has been undertaken in a South London borough. The object was to find work in that area for a number of blind men, placed by the Ministry of Labour, whose employment in the electrical engineering industry will terminate with the change in contract specification. The special officer engaged for this work investigated 92 factories and found 11 operations suitable for men and 96 for women.

At the beginning of this year the Section conducted another special investigation at the laboratories of Messrs. Kodak into the processing and developing of films in mass miniature photography and mass miniature radiography. The Section established that, with slight adaptations, this work is entirely suitable for totally blind or partially sighted women, preferably with some knowledge of shorthand-typing. The peace-time wage rate is good, and it is hoped to develop this occupation as a new career for blind secondary school leavers.

Output

Returns from employers show conclusively that blind workers engaged on semi-skilled machine operations and the inspection grades associated with them maintain a higher rate of production than those working on unskilled repetition jobs, such as deburring and simple assembly. Output figures supplied by 7 London

factories which together employ 47 blind workers (not a selected group) show production ratios of from 87% to 122%. The average is 98.6%. All but three of the 47 mentioned had, before placement, been classified as "unemployable," and the majority were certified as "incapable for work" for the purposes of National Health Insurance. The jobs on which they are engaged are, with few exceptions, the staple operations of peace-time light engineering.

It has also been proved that on a number of machine jobs blind workers are maintaining an output substantially greater than that of normal seeing operatives. Three capstan lathe operators at Messrs. De Havillands, whose output was carefully checked over a three months' test period, maintained the following output (regarding the sighted average as 100%): 114.6%, 112.6%, 91.9%. The average during the period of all sighted workers in the capstan section was 99%.

Immediate Problems

During the period of transition from war to peace production, it is likely that a number of blind factory workers who are now doing low-

grade work, such as deburring and repetition assembly, will become unemployed unless higher grade work can be found for them. For this reason it is important that Placement Officers in all parts of the country should concentrate on the staple operations of peace-time industry. It has been conclusively proved that the blind can justify their employment on semi-skilled work, but it should be recognised that placement of this quality requires more work and that the cost per placement will increase greatly in the future.

There is encouraging evidence that employers for the most part would prefer to retain their blind workers, and are anxious to co-operate with Placement Officers in upgrading them to work which will justify peace-time employment. In order not to lose this opportunity, it is evident that in many areas the work of placement will have to be done again. Training and the development of adapted precision instruments are part of the solution to this problem. In both these matters the National Institute is working in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Why Bar the Blind?

Sir,—I have read *THE NEW BEACON* over quite a long period, and I feel that it is time I gave expression to a matter that has been in my mind for a long time.

I have noted in your columns protests from blind people concerning their struggles to make headway in the Blind World. There was, for instance, a lady, an M.A., who described how she had worked hard to obtain her degree, but afterwards found it almost impossible to get a situation worthy of her ability. She had to take a job in a war factory filing metal; then the next job she was able to get was as a teacher, for which she received little or no wages.

Is it fair to treat blind people in this way after they have been encouraged to make and have made no mean effort? I note that there are quite a number of vacancies advertised in the current issue of *THE NEW BEACON*, but all say only sighted people can apply. Is this fair? Is it justice? It does seem all wrong that local authorities should spend good money to train blind people who, when a vacancy arises, are barred from applying for the post. If blind people are trained, why are they barred from these jobs? Is it that the blind are just the

stool-pigeons for a set of sighted protectionists? Are the people who boast about the blind being clever just using such stories to raise money to make their jobs secure?

I make these bitter protests because I have felt the overwhelming odds. I have applied many times for jobs, but have always been turned down because I am blind, notwithstanding the fact that I have been recommended by more than one manager of a Blind Workshop. I think it is time that the N.I.B. faced up to its job, and saw to it that only when no blind person was available, sighted people should get a look in.

Yours etc.,
W. SCRIMGEOUR.

(We thoroughly sympathise with our correspondent's attitude, but would point out that neither *THE NEW BEACON* nor its proprietor, the National Institute for the Blind, are responsible for the terms laid down in advertisements of situations vacant. The National Institute has always employed as many blind people as possible in carrying on its work, and has frequently emphasized its opinion that all local authorities and agencies for the blind should employ blind people in preference to sighted, in all positions where sight is not essential.—EDITOR.)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Three American Books.

For the schoolgirl who enjoys biography, but is inclined to think that life for great-grandmother must have been stuffy and dull, the story told in *A Sounding Trumpet* (Louisa Hall Tharp) published by Robert McBride & Co., 116, East 16th Street, New York, 3, should provide stimulating reading. The title comes from the lines in the battle-hymn of the Republic, "He hath sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat", and tells the story of the life of its author, Julia Ward Howe. She was certainly the most surprising Principal's wife who ever presided over the dining-table of an institution for the blind in Victorian days, and a person of enterprise even from childhood, showing a most unmaidenly desire to share her brothers' lessons in what her teacher described as "dirty smelly chemistry", and firmly tying herself to a chair for an hour while she wrestled with her German Grammar.

At the age of 23 she visited Boston, and was introduced by the young poet Longfellow to his friend Samuel Howe, a young surgeon who, after working with the Greek Army, had returned to take up work as Principal of Perkins Institution for the Blind. Julia was taken to see him and to meet his deaf-blind protégée Laura Bridgman. "The tall man on a great black horse, singing as he came" (how dull head-masters of blind schools seem to-day, by comparison!) swept impetuous Julia off her feet, and romance swiftly followed. She married her hero, and sailed with him to Europe, where visits to the opera, institutions for the blind, Mr. Dickens and the Bridewell prison were some of the highlights of a rather unusual honeymoon. All her life, in America and in Europe, Julia Ward Howe came into contact with stimulating people; and Emerson, Whittier, Florence Nightingale, Lincoln, Oliver Wendell Holmes and John Brown jostle one another in the pages of her story.

An account of the Civil War naturally takes up much of the book, and the writing by Julia of "good words for the stirring tune" of *John Brown's Body*—the "good words" being the familiar battle hymn beginning "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord", which caught on like wildfire to the extreme surprise of their writer.

The last chapter of Mrs. Howe's life shows that to the end she retained her virile enthusiasm for the "causes" to which she had dedicated her

life:—peace between North and South as a forerunner of international peace, woman suffrage, the admission of women to the Universities. When she was ninety, she was given an honorary degree by Smith College and on being asked to write something in the Guest book the frivolous old lady penned no noble sentiment, but the words:—

Julia Ward Howe
Wandered to Smith College,
In pursuit of knowledge;
Leaves so much the wiser,
Nothing could surprise her.

How the girl students must have loved so unorthodox a visitor!

Latchstring Out by Skulda V. Baner (Houghton Mifflin Co., Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass.) is a book whose gay jacket, end-pieces and frontispiece are a delightful riot of colour in a wartime world of austerity standards in printing.

The book is written by a Swedish American woman who has lost her sight, and is the story of a small Swedish girl (mainly autobiographical one guesses) and her father Gustaf, keeper of a store in a Michigan mining-village.

It is a tale of small happenings, but written with a vividness that makes them live. There is the meeting of the Sewing Society, when the elderly ladies of the village, in demure white shirtwaists and black skirts, sing "Bringing in the Sheaves," drink coffee and eat sugared buns, sew and gossip cosily of the new minister; there is the story of the funeral of little Plenda, when Grandfather Peter personally entrusted her to the keeping of "the Gentleman high up beyond the grey sky"; and there is the tale of Schuster's American bazaar, with its "wall of dolls" and "fat red pin-cushions set in a lady's high-heeled shoe," rivalling and challenging anything that the little country stores could produce. There are stories, too, of old Swedish customs like Lucia Day, and Midsummer Eve, and meetings of the Scandinavian Society.

The reader of "Latchstring Out" is not surprised to learn that its writer used her first savings for "the one thing she wanted," a trip to Sweden in 1939. For all through the book there runs a suggestion of exile, a turning-back of the heart to that far-away country from which Miss Baner's forbears came. Reading it, one realises very vividly how many of the people of the United States "belong" to Europe.

It Was Not My Own Idea, by Robinson Pierce, published by the American Foundation for the Blind, price \$1.50, is written by a blind man who lost his sight in early manhood, and now looks back in late middle-age, with the experience of over forty years of blindness, to offer advice and encouragement to those who come after. It adds a useful volume to the rather scanty literature on what might be called the practice of blindness.

That the writer was, before blindness came, an athlete and a serious student of astronomy, is evidence that the conquest of blindness must have been, for him, no easy phase, for it involved a complete reorientation.

Forty years ago, in the States as here, Blind Welfare was in its beginnings, and the young teacher, who had just entered on his profession when the blow fell, would hardly be likely to-day to be advised to throw all his training overboard for life in the country. To be quite accurate, the Commission for the Blind which he consulted seems to have been acquiescent rather than active, and when Mr. Pierce himself proposed a country life and possibly poultry keeping, "they agreed heartily that it was a grand scheme," and sent him to carry out his plans with good wishes and a Braille alphabet.

For the first two years he worked alone in his rocky little poultry farm, but then married the girl who, in the words of the dedication of his book, "cared enough and had the courage to walk beside the path I tread." They bought a small nearby farm, and except for the horse work Mr. Pierce tackled every job, including a considerable amount of gardening, making of chicken coops, gates, erecting of a summer-house and even the putting up of barbed-wire fences—"the meanest job for a blind man," he says. They eventually kept a herd of cows, began to keep horses, and took to market-gardening.

During the war of 1914-18, the labour problem became so acute that finally farming had to be given up; but at the time of writing the book, the author was back on a farm again, this time a "cracker farm" in Florida, growing tung trees for their oil and enjoying it—"all except the red bugs and the ants and the alligators"—which to British ears sounds a pretty formidable exception.

A good deal of Mr. Robinson's book is devoted to the problems of all blind men and women—getting about alone, in town and country, travelling by train, and doing all those personal things about which the seeing person never thinks, but which present formidable difficulties to those who do not see. He writes pleasantly, with practical good sense, and with a good-natured humour that appreciates the ridiculous;

a blind friend lent him, in the early days of his blindness, a little book by a Frenchman, treating of readjustment to the handicap, and including a recommendation that the man who loses his sight should buy his own house so that once he has learned his way about it he will not have to readjust himself again. "It does seem a happy idea, but how few of us could buy a house," is Mr. Robinson's mild comment.

In the last words of his book he tells us how he sometimes sings as he goes about his work, and a rather far-off neighbour hearing the sound which "distance in kindly fashion had mellowed" merely remarked—"That old blind man is 'sho happy to-night."

It Was Not My Own Idea is a book which for its courage, cheerfulness and good temper can be warmly commended to those who need the reassurance of a fellow-traveller that, though the way may be difficult, it will not demand more than the spirit of man can bring to it.

PERSONALIA

The Executive of the Aberdeen Town and County Association for Teaching the Blind at their Homes, at a Special Meeting on February 28, took farewell of Mrs. I. K. MOIR, who has been Superintendent of the Association since January 14, 1924. Mrs. Moir has retired for family reasons. Mr. Gavin J. Catto, as Convener of the Finance Committee, gave expression to the enthusiasm, diligence and interest in the blind which Mrs. Moir displayed during her régime. In particular, he extolled her labours in connection with arranging throughout the area Sales of Work of articles made by the blind. He concluded by presenting an honorarium in the form of a cheque. Mr. Catto's remarks were supplemented by Bishop Deane and Mrs. James Fiddes and also by Mr. A. Douglas Pollock, the Senior Teacher, on behalf of the staff. Mrs. Moir suitably acknowledged and subsequently entertained the Committee to cake and wine.

To succeed Mrs. Moir the Committee had unanimously appointed Mr. A. DOUGLAS POLLOCK, who has been their Senior Teacher since 1929. Mr. Catto extended a welcome to Mr. Pollock and expressed the Committee's confidence that the work so ably carried on by Mrs. Moir would be maintained by Mr. Pollock. Mr. Pollock, in reply, undertook to uphold the tradition of the Superintendentship.

BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW

EACH year of the war has made the problem of the provision of materials for pastime handicrafts more acute, and the fact that such materials are, in the jargon of the hour, "in short supply," is one of the biggest worries of the home teacher. She has for a long time been at her wit's end to keep even a trickling supply available—centre cane has disappeared, string for bags is unobtainable, even wool demands precious coupons. Necessity has, of course, proved the mother of invention, and all sorts of new materials have been pressed into service. Even the radio-location strips (if that is their proper name) dropped by obliging enemy planes have provided a substitute for tinsel, and enabled at least one rural home teacher to cock a snook at the Führer, as she removed it from the roadside. But the situation does not improve, and even if the war ends soon, any hopes of supplies in the reasonably near future is remote.

If home teachers can no longer teach, because they have nothing to teach with, their position is difficult, and they fear lest some of the less enlightened authorities may question the need for their services. Those who know anything of their work realise that there is still plenty for them to do, even if they never give another lesson in rug-making or raffia work; for teaching is only a part of their task, and a part that circumstances may make smaller, even if materials become more plentiful.

For as the younger "unemployables" are in many cases absorbed into industry, the home teacher's energies will increasingly be devoted to the care of older folk, many of whom are too tired and too infirm to wish to learn anything. She will, however, still have one group—the newly blind—for whom she can do a good deal. What, bereft of handicraft materials, can she do for them?

The war has proved that the younger blind man and woman in industry need not be confined to the traditional workshop trades. Skilled investigators have been able to discover literally hundreds of processes in normal factory industry that can be done without sight. At first sight, one might be tempted to hope that a rather similar widening of the home teacher's horizon should be possible. Has the home teacher perhaps been unduly influenced by the rather unimaginative syllabus of the home teacher's examination, and are string bags and straw bags, raffia mats and sea-grass stools really the only available pastime handicrafts? But a survey of the occupations taught to seeing persons in rehabilitation centres by the occupational therapist shows that even for the patient with sight, pastime handicrafts are limited, and the only ones which have not already been tried out by the home teacher appear to be those dependent upon colour for their interest and beauty, and therefore unsuitable for the blind pupil. But the real job of a home teacher is not to teach the elderly blind to make things for bazaars. It is to help them so to readjust their lives that new interests open up and new activities are possible. Even the fact that there are no materials available for the orthodox pastime handicrafts has its undeniably bright side, for it means that there will be no finished goods to dispose of—always one of the nightmare problems of the home teacher.

More and more in the future the home teacher can devote her energies (as an article on another page of *THE NEW BEACON* urges) to giving instruction in useful things, and one hopes that the College of Teachers of the Blind may so amend its syllabus as to deflect the candidate from straw bags to more useful occupations.

The housewife who has lost her sight can be helped to cook and clean, to make do and mend. The home teacher in the course of her work comes across blind women who have overcome the difficulties of sightless housekeeping in a wonderful way, and she can pass on the lessons she learns from them. Classes in the cookery that can be safely attempted even by the totally blind should be held at every handicraft centre, and a Housewifery Brains Trust to which all can contribute their experiences and housekeeping wrinkles is useful and amusing.

Classes for the handyman where the blind man can learn to do the hundred and one jobs about the house, talks on keeping rabbits and poultry, lessons in shoe repairing, in the care of wireless sets, in vegetable growing, are among a wide range of possibilities.

These things are not new, for the enterprising home teacher has already tried them out. But they must become more general.

THE EDITOR.

TEACHING IN THE HOME

I BELIEVE most Home Teachers of the Blind will agree with me when I say that in our student days we acquire through instructors and text-books a strong desire to teach all and sundry. We learn the best methods of approach, the correct tools to use, minute instructions, and gaze with awe on the finished perfection in the photographs. After some months of such intensive study, the fascination of arts and crafts may appeal so strongly that we imagine ourselves shining forth as occupational therapists.

It is assumed by our employers that we shall provide instruction for all who require it, teaching material is supplied free of charge, so we go forth with a clear conscience and ambitious plans for our future pupils.

We soon find there is real need for our services. The idle hours of darkness in which many blind people must spend their days need to be filled with suitable occupation if normal mentality is to be protected. The first difficulty is the choice of craft, and the enthusiastic teacher soon has to relinquish some of her plans and settle down to teaching the elements of plain knitting, simple basketry or other easy work which the modern school child was taught at a very tender age.

This is rather disappointing to those of us who may have overlooked certain basic truths, namely, that (1) the precious sight by which we learned our craft is denied to our pupils, (2) that they are mainly people of advancing years, with a restricted capacity for remembering instructions and work-coarsened fingers which cannot accomplish strange tasks unaided by any visual help.

The second disappointment comes when we have introduced our pupils to suitable crafts and then find we rarely have time to give weekly lessons. As soon as the primary instructions are mastered, creative passions are let loose, and to many pupils the quality matters far less than the movement of fingers at a speed to satisfy mind and body alike. We are presented with a variety of articles which are quite impossible to sell, the pride of the creator dwindles when he has to give his goods away, and very often we are back at the starting point, trying to instil more patience into a disgruntled pupil.

Much depends on the teacher's choice of occupations, for even if basketry, raffia work, etc., is mastered efficiently, markets are limited by the circle of sympathetic friends.

Far better to forget many of our complicated crafts, and teach women to sew firmly or make knitted garments for themselves, and men to undertake small household repairs, simple carpentry, poultry-keeping, etc.

Men usually favour the more energetic occupations, and may specially ask to be taught basketry or stool making, and while there is sufficient initiative, every occupational request should be met as far as possible. In the slums, however, rooms are usually over-furnished and small, there is often no garden-shed or cupboard-space available, and the only workroom is the kitchen. Life can be made very difficult for the family when an over-zealous teacher stimulates a man's first whim without making sure that some spare corner will be private for such activities, or that the man's wife will not resent his filling the kitchen with strands of cane and building his spiky basket on the cooking table. In the early days of teaching enthusiasm, I was guilty of this omission and quite unaware of the resulting quarrels, until one day a pupil asked for all the material to be collected before his wife burned it, while a very patient mother was forced to remark that dinners had to be prepared and served on chairs whenever her son felt like making a basket, because he could only work on the kitchen table.

These women may not have fully sympathised with the active desires of their blind menfolk, but there are two sides to the question, for no one will dispute the housewife's pride of place in her kitchen, and the nervous attacks she can be subject to when her men are always cluttered about her.

However, not all homes are so cramped, nor must we expect every pupil to be solely influenced by us. Indeed, we can often benefit by some of their pet inventions to overcome personal difficulties.

For instance, one pupil in the throes of sea-grass stool seating, took his problems to the dinner table one day, and halfway through the meal discovered that the straight wooden needle could be improved on. He cleaned his chop bone, bored a hole in the top and used it with great success. Such needles were in plentiful supply at every chop dinner, and his teacher is now the proud possessor of the original bone needle.

Women often excel themselves as knitters. Baby wear is most popular, and many blind women are extraordinarily clever in designing patterns and sizes without any instructions.

Others specialise in doll-dressing, producing modern outfits for dolls of every size. This art is never wasted, and the doll-dresser is in constant demand for months before the Christmas gift season.

So much for women knitters, but what of the brave men who study this art? Opinions vary, and some teachers may find it a useful outlet for men who live in cramped surroundings.

I am probably biased because of a little bachelor of fifty who used to spend his afternoons sitting by the window benignly knitting complicated designs in cardigans and gloves. On an adjoining table he kept a bag of fruit drops (for he was a non-smoker), a patent wool-winder, row-counter, instruction book line, and his beloved "spy glass." He disdained Braille, like so many people who have limited sight, and no one could persuade him to relinquish the glass or the small printed instructions because of possible strain to his remaining vision. Around the small room lay abundant evidence of work on hand: skeins of wool were hung on the chairs, knitting needles reposed where another man would have his pipes, and there was usually a completed garment waiting to be pressed.

He came to our Pastime Club each week and sat in proud male isolation amid a company of knitting women. He turned sock heels for them, rescued dropped stitches, and gave special instructions to the more ambitious of his feminine neighbours.

How insincerely we admired those perfectly knitted and well-pressed articles of his! Markets were easily found, although he supplied his own wool and named his price with a fair margin of profit, but few of us could endure the sight of Charles, with his spectacles on the tip of his nose, acting as knitting specialist. He came to us an expert, and it was fortunate that no other males were attracted to the art, for the conceited little man was the prime deterrent to our putting knitting needles into any man's hands by choice.

His exit was on a romantic note, for he left London to be married. Our parting hope was that the new wife was no mediocre knitter, or, happier still, that she was a crochet expert!

Braille is a beneficial occupation for men and women alike, peaceably learned in the armchair, and of first importance in shaping the future happiness of blind people. Many pupils are eager to learn, believing it can be accomplished in a few weeks. They probably know people who can read with great speed, and it is a most attractive thought that books on every subject are available for their enjoyment. Impatience is responsible for many failures to get beyond the introductory stage. Confronted by six dots

which remain a confused jumble when brain and fingers alike are tired by repeated efforts, they cast the text-book aside and lose inspiration to make another attempt, until the teacher arrives to encourage them again.

Not everyone has the intellectual capacity for absorbing the complicated Braille system. We foster every desire to be taught, but so often find that the spelling of even the simplest words has been forgotten, and that the pupil really needs a course in English before tackling Braille. Even so there are exceptions which prevent us from discouraging the most unpromising pupils.

One young Jewess had no English education, although she spoke the language fairly well. She was determined to master Braille. The teaching of the English sighted alphabet was just completed when Polly moved to another district, and the pioneer teacher felt rather sorry about the coming ordeal of the new teacher. Many months passed before news came through that Polly had achieved her ambition and was officially listed as a Braille reader. No mean accomplishment of pupil and teacher alike!

Thomas was another doubtful pupil—a dock labourer over fifty years old, with work-coarsened fingers and a pronounced Cockney accent. Yet he mastered Braille in six lessons. He invented his own aids, first the six pennies, and later a matchbox fitted with six drawing pins to represent the Braille signs. His conversational powers were limited—he had never travelled beyond Wapping, so in spite of his eagerness to win through, no one was more surprised than his teacher—known to him as "mate"—at his rapid ability to read his "thrillers" with enjoyment. She was not entitled to any praise. It was sheer dogged patience on his part, the determination to find some outlet from his restricted life that took him over all the manifold difficulties of spelling, touch sense, and the fearsome list of contractions.

Finally, a small tribute to William, a dear old pet of eighty-four, who achieved Moon reading in three lessons, and was a regular member of the National Library until his death.

So we see that valiant people will overcome apparently insuperable difficulties, and we go on our way sparing a precious half-hour here and there between our form-filling duties, knowing that if we cannot shine as advanced occupational therapists, we can provide some occupation to guide our pupil back into mental and physical activity.

Such achievements also have excellent effect on relatives who presume that loss of sight renders a person incapable of the humblest task. Men are the chief sufferers in this respect, for

women usually find some outlet in domestic work, and any ability the man gains through our efforts adds to his prestige in the home circle and prepares the way for further adventures about the house.

Unfortunately, our help ceases at this point, because those who plan our teaching career and dictate the crafts to study for Home Teachers' Diplomas, concentrate far too much on the purely ornamental crafts. A few courses on practical occupations like simple carpentry,

gardening, poultry-keeping, household repairs, etc., and their inclusion in the examination syllabus, would provide us with knowledge of more permanent and useful value to our men pupils.

However, until these occupations are appreciated at their true worth, there is nothing to prevent the teacher from acquiring such knowledge and passing the information on, to the best of her ability.

A. K.

SATURDAY FOR BABS

By LUCILLE LEMP

Reprinted from "National News of the Blind," by permission of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Miss Lucille Lemp was born in Tavistock, Ontario. At the age of three illness deprived her of her sight and resulted in such serious paralysis that she is unable to walk and has only limited use of her hands. Her multiple handicaps prevented her from attending school and her education had to be carried on in her home. She is proficient at Braille, typing, knitting, light handicrafts, and her attainments in the scholastic field were, during her school years, well above the average of pupils of her own age. She is a skilful performer on the auto-harp. To her many friends, she is known as "Babs."

THIS is the way her day begins—she washes and dresses and powders her chins.

Seriously though, these three items always receive her undivided attention. She plans never to wear the same dress two days in succession, and carefully selects a matching bow for her hair, as well as a clean collar or a different pin for her dress. She also strives to wear well-brushed shoes of a colour that will harmonize with the rest of her clothes. Heaven forbid that she should ever neglect the slightest detail in the foregoing procedure!

After she has eaten her breakfast, she takes up her trusty needles and does her daily stint on the white leggings which a lady has ordered for her young offspring.

While being busily engaged at this tedious task, she tunes in her favourite Saturday morning programme, "The Garden Gate." Through this medium she obtains timely tips on the care and culture of house plants. African violets, spring flowers and Wandering Jew are her specialties. They require the least skill and knowledge and produce the most satisfactory results. Her secret ambition has ever been and, alas, always will be, to become enrolled in the Order of the Green Thumb.

At ten-thirty, she picks up her most recent Braille magazine and keeps her appointment with the hairdresser next door. While under the drier, she dreams that she is lolling on the sands of the South Sea Islands with the balmy breezes playing about her, and mellow guitars humming in the distance.

After dinner she dries the dishes and goes

over to the telephone office to lend moral support to her sister-in-law who is learning the work. They laugh together over the amusing incidents; and squirm together over the more serious ones, when a subscriber registers complaint.

When Babs comes home at three o'clock she glances over her homework for her school literature lesson in the evening. Her teacher kindly calls once a week to teach such subjects as Composition, Ancient History, Latin, German and Literature.

From four-thirty to six, she listens to several records of the charming story, "How Green Was My Valley," on the talking book.

Meanwhile, she does a bit of knitting for the Red Cross which happens to be a pair of toe caps, above all things. Far be it from her to deprive any fighting fellow of the comforts of home just for the want of a cozy toe cap.

After supper, the ever lovin' job of drying the dishes pops up again. This little chore having been tucked away for another day, she dolls up for the evening.

At seven-thirty, her literature lesson begins, and she's swept off her feet by Julius Caesar and her moods alternate between joy and sorrow as she listens to shorter poems.

The lesson ends at eight-thirty and Babs' girl friend calls to take her for a walk in her wheel chair. They collect a few more friends *en route* and on their way home they drop in at the lunch room on the corner for cake and coffee.

This is the way her Saturday ends—with Chili and coffee and plenty of friends.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Barrister Passes Solicitors' Final.—Mr. E. H. Boyce, of Chesterfield, has passed his Solicitors' Final. He was educated at Worcester College for the Blind and subsequently graduated at Oxford University. For many years he was a Home Teacher in Chesterfield, but he studied law, and in 1939 was called to the Bar. He has now changed his allegiance to the other branch of the legal profession, in which he has every prospect of success.

Blind Organist at Aylesbury.—The Aylesbury Congregational Church welcomed its new organist, Mr. Arthur Jones, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M., last month. Mr. Jones has been totally blind all his life, but has achieved remarkable skill and is a musician of outstanding quality. He was educated at the Royal Blind School, and then proceeded to the Royal Normal College for the Blind, for an intensive course of study in music. At the conclusion of that course he was appointed Teacher of Music at the College. When sitting for his F.R.C.O. degree—exactly the same exhibition as set for those with their full faculties—he carried off the coveted "Read" and "Limpus" prizes for the best organ playing among all the competitors.

Successful Blind Chess Team.—The outstanding feature, as we go to press, of the matches played so far in the Chess section of the Sheffield Works' Sports Association is the unbeaten record of the Sharrow Grange team, which is composed entirely of blind players from the Welfare of the Blind Department, Sharrow Lane. The Sharrow Grange team is the first in the league, composed of seven teams, who are competing for the Woodward Trophy (league championship). Sharrow Grange has won all its six matches.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the deaths of:—

Carl Hardebeck, Ireland's well-known blind composer, at Dublin, aged 76 years. He was born in London, his father being German and his mother of Welsh origin, and although blind from infancy, he began the study of music at the age of four. He went to Ireland in the early twenties, and became Lecturer in Music at University College, Cork. He had always been attracted by Irish national music and devoted the remainder of his life to it. He plunged with

great enthusiasm into the activities of the Gaelic League, where his sterling character and fine talents made him a leading light. His contribution to the cause of Irish music is of such value that no future Irish composer can possibly afford to be unacquainted with it or avoid being influenced by it. His output of traditional Irish music has been prolific, embracing works for voices, strings, pianoforte and orchestra. Right up to the day of his death he was at work sending forward fresh manuscripts for publication by the Government department "An Gum."

Miss Sarah Wilson, aged 19, after some months in hospital. She was a pupil at Chorleywood College from 1939 to 1942, and formerly attended Blenheim Walk School, Leeds.

Miss Evelyn Mary John, aged 20, on 12th February in University College Hospital; after being knocked down by a car when crossing a road accompanied by a sighted friend. Miss John, whose parents lived in China, lost her sight at the age of 13, and was a pupil at Chorleywood College from 1938 until 1944. After passing School Certificate she was trained by the National Institute for the Blind as a telephonist, and a post had been found for her as telephonist and receptionist at the United Nations Information Organisation, pending the return of her mother and younger sisters, who have been interned by the Japanese since 1941. Her death in such tragic circumstances has been a shock to many, as her endearing personality gave her a host of friends.

Henry Hewick, 60 years of age, Trades Manager of the Bristol Royal Blind Asylum Workshops for 15 years. His death will be a great loss to the Institution. His colleagues on the staff and the employees in the Workshops have lost a very sincere fellow worker.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Bristol Royal Blind Asylum or School of Industry.—This organisation, which cares for over 800 blind persons, celebrated its 150th anniversary by the launching of an appeal for Homes for the Bristol blind, "the final link in the chain of blind welfare work in this city," and set itself a target of £20,000, nearly three-quarters of which had already been raised when the Report was compiled. Of the 800 blind on the Register, nearly one-half receive domiciliary assistance, which in many cases is augmented

by grants from the Bristol Fund for the Blind. For his work as Secretary of this fund, tribute is paid to Mr. King Cummings of the National Institute for the Blind. Full employment in the workshops and total earnings of over £7,160 by home workers show that industrially the Royal Blind Asylum can look back on a satisfactory year.

Manchester and District Social Club for the Blind.—This Club celebrates its Jubilee year in 1945, and has entered the new year full of energy

and enthusiasm. The Club keeps open every evening, and a very wide range of activities are carried out. Indoor games, outings, a carol concert, a visit to the Oldham Club, a theatre party and a dance have been among these, and an interesting innovation has been a monthly debate through the winter months. That these debates have included one on Social Credit and another on Voluntaryism or State Control show that the Club is alive to new interests and ideas. The Club premises have been repaired, and further improvements are contemplated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS.

Owing to an increase in the volume of orders, shortage of labour, and changes of staff, the Mail Order Department of the National Institute for the Blind is in arrears. In order to enable it to cope with arrears and urgent essential needs, the Institute requests its customers, especially private individuals, not to place orders until after April 30, 1945, unless their needs are such that the sending of an order is imperative. In any event, customers are asked to forward orders at less frequent intervals.

The Institute is confident that it can rely on the co-operation of its customers and solicits their forbearance in these exceptional circumstances.

W. MCG. EAGAR,
Secretary-General.

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The prices of the following pieces of music are net, but represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production.

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BRaille BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and Blind Individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given, except where otherwise stated. All books and pamphlets are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covered, except where otherwise stated.

Fiction :

End of the Chapter, by John Galsworthy. The three novels, each complete in itself, published under this title, constitute the final section of the Forsyte Novels, of which the first trilogy "The Forsyte Saga" and the second trilogy "A Modern Comedy" have already been issued in Braille.

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Miscellaneous :

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Maps :

19284. War Map of Germany—Eastern Section. With key. With the Western Section, issued some weeks ago, enables you to follow the final operations of the European War. Pamphlet, no cover. 1d. net. E4.

Natural History :

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719 3. La Puerta del Vino.	

720 4. "Les Fées sont d'exquises danseuses."	
721 7. La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune.	
722 8. Ondine.	
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Wells, H. G. The Invisible Man	7
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35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.
and

NORTHERN BRANCH,
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BASKETMAKER, practical man with knowledge of buying and pricing required as Assistant Foreman. Good prospects and conditions, superannuation. Apply to : General Manager, Royal Glasgow Asylum for the Blind, 111, Saracen Street, Glasgow.

INSTRUCTOR for Telephony School, Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth, required. Ability to teach braille and typing essential. Successful candidate will be required to undergo course of training in Telephony for the purpose of instructing in this subject when proficient. Salary £150 per annum, resident. Apply for application form to Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All home teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.

To **HOME TEACHERS** and others : The Royal Normal College for the Blind will have a vacancy in May for an Assistant Teacher of Typewriting. Experience not essential—suitable applicant will be taught methods. Salary in accordance with Burnham Scale, with free board and lodgings for supervisory duties. Reply, stating age, qualifications and experience to : Principal, Rowton Castle, near Shrewsbury.

HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1945. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Applications are invited for the post of **female** (sighted) certificated **Home Teacher and Visitor** for the Blind. The successful applicant will be seconded for duty to the Cleveland and South Durham Institute for the Blind, Middlesbrough.

The appointment is subject to the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination. The salary scale is £156, rising by annual increments of £13 to a maximum of £208 per annum, together with a cost of living bonus at present at the rate of 18s. 6d. per week. The commencing salary will be fixed in accordance with previous experience.

Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, and accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, should be forwarded to the undersigned not later than the 28th March, 1945.

H. G. THORNLEY,
Clerk of the County Council.

County Hall, Northallerton.
10th March, 1945.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BARNESLEY. BLIND WELFARE DEPARTMENT. APPOINTMENT OF HOME VISITOR AND TEACHER.

Applications are invited for the post of **Sighted Female Home Visitor and Teacher** at a salary of £180 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £250 per annum, plus the prevailing cost-of-living bonus, which is at present £40. 6s. per annum.

In fixing the commencing salary, regard will be had to the successful applicant's previous service as a certificated Home Teacher with a Local Authority or agency for the Blind.

The appointment will be terminable by one month's notice on either side and will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937. The successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Applications stating age, whether married or single, qualifications and experience, together with copies of not more than two recent testimonials, should be sent to the Medical Officer of Health, Public Health Department, Town Hall, Barnsley, not later than the 9th April, 1945.

A. E. GILFILLAN,
Town Clerk.

Town Hall, Barnsley.
27th February, 1945.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

VOL. XXIX. No 340.

APRIL 15TH, 1945.

PRICE 3d.

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TWO VIEWS OF INDIRECT VISION

I.

By FRANK EYRE.

REPLYING to a question put to the B.B.C. Brains Trust, Commander Gould advocated research into the possibility of "indirect vision," to enable the blind to see. He offered no hypothesis, neither did he indicate a direction which such research might take.

It is not a new idea. Many of us remember the publicity given some years ago to what was called "skin-vision." It was asserted that we have in our skin a multitude of what may be described as sub-microscopic eyes which, by concentrated training through a prolonged effort of will, can be made to function like a normal eye and convey visual impressions to the brain. One man, I remember, claimed to have become so expert a "skin-visionary" as to be able to play tennis efficiently. Unfortunately, none of the evidence on the subject seemed to be first hand; it was always the familiar story of somebody who knew somebody who had achieved the miracle. So far as I know, the whole matter has been shelved for a long time.

Then again, I am told, there is a method propounded by a Frenchman, who wrote a book about it, setting out a sort of systematised self-hypnosis inducing vivid dreams which would eventually be transmuted into something equivalent to visual perception. A friend, who took this scheme quite seriously, assures me that he certainly achieved the dreams, but came to the conclusion that he could spend his time and energy to better advantage, and he abandoned the practice.

It is a mistake to scoff at such hypotheses, however fantastic they may seem. Leonardo da Vinci was thought to be a fool because he constructed flying machines. Darwin met plenty of ridicule, and few people believed in the sanity of the early experimenters in the fields of electrical energy.

As Commander Gould pointed out, we do not see with the eye but through the eye. Nevertheless, it is difficult to conceive sight without the intervention of a lens to collect light rays, a retina on which to collect these rays into an image, to be transmitted by means of an optic nerve to the brain wherein lies the ultimate physical mystery of sight. I therefore venture on a path hitherto untrodden by our scientific angels and suggest a camera which shall function like an eye, collecting a picture to be transmitted by Röntgen rays direct to that part of the meninges which is designed to receive and react to such images.

April 15th, 1945

Of course, the idea is fantastic ; probably, it is quite unscientific. All the same, wild ideas have a way of producing valuable by-products though they may not achieve their primary intention. Penicillin was discovered by accident. Rustless steel was the result of experiments undertaken to find an alloy suitable for gun-barrels.

So I offer my Röntgen camera idea gratis to any imaginative researcher who has nothing better on hand. If he cannot fix us up with a portable gadget that will enable us to estimate a lady's age, or see that the other fellow doesn't drink our beer—and a few things of greater importance, he may achieve unexpected and valuable by-products, and I for one will say "thank you" to Commander Gould for a provocative project.

At a later session of the Brains Trust, a well-worn question arose in the form, "Is it possible to describe colour to people born blind?" On the whole, the wise five thought not. It did not appear to occur to any of their spontaneous

wisdoms that the words "light" and "sight" must convey ideas as nebulous as colour. I submit that the answer to the query is no, unless there is such a thing as inherited visual memory. I have heard of such memory being claimed, but a contrary view is taken in H. G. Wells's skilful story, "The Country of the Blind," where we are introduced to an isolated human community who have all been blind for many generations, and to whom the words "sight" and "light" are completely meaningless.

If and when Commander Gould is justified and my Röntgen camera is perfected to convey an impression of solar light on its X-ray carrier wave, we will be content with tones of black and white until "glorious technicolour" is added at a later date. Meantime, we find life abundant and interesting ; those of us who have a store of visual memories are thankful for them, for mental pictures are available at will to help us on our way.

II.

By ALBERT HODGSON.

COMMANDER GOULD'S suggestion took me back to my early days of Braille and the first number of *Progress* I ever saw.

Its chief supplement was a report by the N.I.B. on an apparatus by which it was claimed that the blind could read ordinary print or script through the action of electricity on selenium, whatever that may be. The findings were that it might be possible, but that the apparatus was too complex and costly for any but the rich and leisured.

Since those days I have obtained further details of the fearful wild fowl known as the Optophone. It operates by the action of light upon "the heavy metal selenium." Shaped letters, figures and punctuation marks are projected upon a plate of that metal. The effect is that each gives out a sound varying according to its shape, which sound is reproduced on a diaphragm. It does indeed sound complicated, and would not, even were it within my reach, tempt me from the pleasant and simple paths of Braille. The man who set himself to master it would, I should imagine, have to live like a hermit, or like that red-headed chump in the Sherlock Holmes story who was anchored to the job of copying out the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. In any case, it would not be portable, and would serve no purpose but that of reading.

What I think Commander Gould has in mind is (a) some apparatus that would be attached

to the face, as spectacles are worn, and enable either the eyes or some other part of its surface to "see," or (b) the discovery of means by which the nervous system could be stimulated without apparatus to "see with the skin." In the age of radio and television, it would be foolish to dogmatise on what is or is not possible. A "seeing" apparatus might be made, and be worn on the brow like a Hebrew phylactery, enabling that part covered by it to see, but the possibility, if there be one, of giving unlimited sight to the skin with no external aid is somewhat formidable. Blind Milton, through the mouth of blind Samson, lamented the lack of it:—"O why was sight to such a tender ball as the eye confined, and not as the feeling, diffused through every limb?" But such a diffusion would surely have its drawbacks. It is not that a man would see too much of what his neighbours were doing, with all the mixed possibilities that would present of good and evil ; it is that he would see too much of everything at once for the mind to absorb. One who had acquired that power would become a pathological case of not being able to see the wood for the trees. He would be driven to limit his "sight" by always wearing gloves and a mask to cover those parts of his face which he did not wish to bring into play. He would have to turn up his coat-collar, lest his frontal impressions be blurred by those received from the nape of his neck. And it is to be hoped

that his being normally clothed would prevent the bulk of his person from seeing too much, as in his bath or the briny. One may further hope that this new sight would not have the power to pierce opaque objects. Mr. Pickwick suffered enough at the hands of the law as it was; but even "a alleybi" could never have saved him if Sergeant Buzfuz had been able to draw from Sam the admission that he could see through "a flight o' stairs and a deal door." Besides, to want to focus on a solid body and only be able to see through it would be blindness in reverse gear—as much a curse as the Golden Touch of Midas.

Of course, when the gift was gained, it might be possible to regulate it, to adjust it to concentrate on the thing you wanted to look at and nothing else. But that brings up a more serious point. My friend Mr. Eyre mentions a Frenchman who actually claimed, to some extent, to possess this power by hypnosis. But this same Frenchman also declared that it used up much more nervous force than its exercise was worth. Ay, there's the rub! The nervous system is

far too delicate a thing for Tom, Dick and Harry to tamper with. Also, I am—according to another friend, a seeing lady this time—"a prejudiced old Briton"—one of the kind like Jerome K. Jerome's George of the Boat and the Bummel who objected to the guillotine because, as he put it, "I am an Englishman, and hanging is good enough for me." I don't like monkeying with the occult—yoga and spiritualism and hypnotism and such like. It all smacks of heathen black magic of "wizards that peep and that mutter," and, however we may have come short, we are still a Christian country. Though I own it to be a science, I don't like psychology—though I must admit that, in this case, it is because I resent its invasion of our literature instead of staying in the clinic and the consulting room. If this "seeing business" can be done by tangible means, an apparatus, I am all for it; but playing with nervous, mental, occult, or pseudo-occult forces is to take far too great a risk of sending our health, our peace of mind, our reason itself, where our sight has already gone.

HOME NEWS

Handicapped Children Advisory Committee to the Minister of Education.—Mr. Butler, Minister of Education, stated in the House of Commons on February 8th that he had appointed an Advisory Committee, as promised in the debate on Clause 31 of the new Education Act, to advise him on matters relating to children requiring special educational treatment. Its members are Mr. F. Messer, M.P. (Chairman), Prof. J. M. Mackintosh, Professor of Public Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (Vice-Chairman), Dr. Newth, Senior School Medical Officer, Nottingham, and Mr. E. W. Woodhead, Director of Education, Kent, and formerly Clerk to the Governors of the East Anglian School for Blind and Deaf Children, Gorleston-on-Sea. Mr. Messer, who is a member of the Council of the National Institute for the Blind, did much to further the interests of the handicapped child in the passage of the Education Bill through the House, and his appointment as Chairman of the Committee is a gratifying acknowledgment of his work in this connection.

Education Act 1944, Circular 26.—This Circular, which deals with Draft Regulations under Section 81 of the new Act, is of interest to schools for the blind in that Regulation 2(a)

enables Authorities to pay such expenses of children at special schools as may be necessary to allow them to take part in any school activities. "Reasonable expenditure" likely to be approved by the Minister includes that on purchase of clothing distinctive of the school, on travel in connection with camps, and expeditions and on certain other out-of-school activities, and attendance at school clubs conducted outside school hours.

Memorial to W. M. Stone.—The Craigmillar Club is issuing an appeal for funds to provide a memorial to the late W. M. Stone, Headmaster of the Royal Blind School, Edinburgh, for nearly thirty years, and later Headmaster of the Royal Normal College, Upper Norwood. Details are given on page 76 of this issue.

Precision Instruments for the Blind.—The Technical Dept. of the National Institute for the Blind has, for a long while, been working on the design of a Micrometer suitable for the use of the Blind in sighted engineering industry. Last autumn, a prototype model was used by the Institute's Employment Officers during an investigation carried out by them with the Ministry of Labour and National Service with a view to establishing to what extent the blind

could carry out skilled work in centre-lathe and other turning, together with high-grade inspection made on "short runs." The technical staff of the Ministry were so impressed with the possibilities of the demonstration model produced by the N.I.B. that they very kindly took the matter up officially. As a result of suggestions made by the N.I.B. Technical Staff, a complete range of precision instruments is being produced as a result of joint action between the Ministry, a well-known firm of Micrometer Manufacturers, and the N.I.B. The range includes Height and Depth Gauges, Vernier Calipers, and Micrometers, and it is hoped that in a short while the last of the range, the Bevel Protractor, will be produced in prototype form. Negotiations for the production of these instruments on a commercial basis are now in progress.

Blind Labour Candidate for Parliament.—Mr. J. Perry, who is blind, is one of five nominees for adoption as prospective Labour candidate for the Cannock Division. He has been active in the Labour movement for twenty years.

St. Dunstan's Braille Contests.—Contests for Braille readers will be held annually for five years, following an anonymous gift to St. Dunstan's of £500. The competitors will be divided into two classes: those who are new to Braille, and those who enter for an open championship.

Removal of Sunshine Nursery School at Whitfield Hall.—In 1941 the National Institute's Sunshine Home for Blind Babies at Southport, was badly damaged by enemy action, and accommodation for the Home was found through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Blackett-Ord, at their home Whitfield Hall, near Hexham, Northumberland. Plans have been made for the rebuilding of the Home at Southport, based on the experience gained in running Nursery Schools since then, but as it will be a long time before the rebuilding can be effected and as the Home, or as it is now called, the Nursery School, cannot remain at Whitfield Hall indefinitely the National Institute has decided to accept an extremely good offer of the tenancy for two years of Haydon Park Holiday School, Haydon Bridge, within a few miles of Whitfield Hall. The transfer will be effected on April 21st.

Normally, this house has been used as a Holiday Centre in the summer months for children of nursery school age from the Tyne-side towns, but latterly it has had a more permanent basis on account of the evacuation of children from those towns. It has accommodated 40 children and has all the equipment necessary for a good type of nursery school.

The home is a solidly built, well designed building standing in its own grounds facing south, and is in very good condition. Owing to the keen interest in nursery schools of influential people in Newcastle and district, the home has been adopted very thoroughly for the needs of small children. The house is built on a hill and the gardens slope down to a large meadow, part of which is railed off and contains a paddling pool, sand pit and plenty of space for the children to play freely. In the grounds are green-houses, glass frames and a good orchard with a variety of fruit trees. The blind little ones should be very happy here, and it is indeed fortunate that the National Institute has been able to rent such suitable premises pending the reconstruction of a Nursery School at Southport.

The National Institute is immensely indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Blackett-Ord, the owners of Whitfield Hall, for having allowed their beautiful home to be used for so long as a Nursery School. Their offer of the house was almost providentially timed, as it came about a week before the Southport Home was bombed, when its evacuation was being considered. The babies who have grown up into sturdy little boys and girls at Whitfield Hall will have most happy memories of their sojourn in the secluded dale and of the unfailing kindness of their hosts and the household staff.

A New Measuring Device.—The Technical Department of the National Institute for the Blind was recently asked by a blind piano tuner, who does small repairs, for a device to enable him to take measurements ranging from $\frac{1}{8}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " in steps of $\frac{1}{8}$ ". The measure has been provided and consists of six pieces of steel $\frac{3}{8}$ " wide by $1\frac{1}{8}$ " long. Four of the pieces are respectively $\frac{1}{4}$ ", $\frac{1}{8}$ ", $\frac{1}{16}$ " and $\frac{1}{32}$ " thick, and two pieces are $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick. By placing one or more of these gauges between the points of a pair of calipers, the specified measurements can be obtained. The set is contained in a soft leather case which can be carried in the waistcoat pocket, and a blind man can easily select the different gauges by touch.

Supplies cannot be guaranteed until after the war, but enquiries, which can be sent now and should be addressed to the National Institute for the Blind, 224, Gt. Portland St., London, W.1, will be recorded and dealt with when conditions permit. The price will depend on the demand. The two sets already made cost about 15s. each. If the demand is sufficient, the device could possibly be made in plastic material at a greatly reduced cost.

THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT AMONG THE BLIND IN FRANCE

By R. CAUDMONT.

DETERMINED not to remain under the German yoke if I could help it, I took the first Metro at 5.30 a.m. on the 13th of June, 1940, and left Paris with my wife in circumstances as picturesque as they were dramatic. The Germans entered the capital that very evening.

After many vicissitudes, often distressing and tragic, with scarcely any food or any sleep meanwhile, by the 17th we had reached the mountains of the Corrèze, where we decided not to go any farther. We had got so far without the help of a train of any kind; sometimes on foot, occasionally getting a lift in a lorry. We were machine-gunned and bombed. There was a general depression, aggravated by the alarmist broadcasts of Reynaud, followed later by the still more demoralising ones by Pétain. Then, suddenly, came those messages from General de Gaulle, which aroused once again the courage of us all, so that now we awaited only the signal to resume in all forms the struggle against the invader.

It is impossible to express in sufficiently strong terms the immense good that General de Gaulle did us all by those first calls to resistance, and his appeals for confidence in France and her ally Britain.

As soon as I could, I wrote from my mountain retreat to the blind throughout France, begging them to get together with a view to doing what we could to foster, among ourselves and our friends, at least moral and intellectual resistance to the oppressor and his propaganda.

I then instituted, to serve as a periodical link between us, a sort of Bulletin, which passed from hand to hand. At first it was in Braille

only, and appeared under the doubly symbolic title of "The Rainbow." Each adherent re-copied it, added his own contribution, and circulated his copy among the friends upon whom he could rely. After passing in this way from neighbour to neighbour throughout the whole of France, most of the copies came back to me. This Bulletin was hailed as a ray of sunshine and hope among our many blind friends, who did wonders to get it transmitted from one to another, especially between the occupied and unoccupied zones, where the boundary line was a constant danger to the adherent entrusted with the task of smuggling the Bulletin across.

On my return to Paris in November, 1940, I proceeded to enlarge this Bulletin, and a copy was made in ordinary writing for the seeing. This appeared under constantly varying titles to elude the suspicions of the Germans and the few collaborators.

Subsequently I organised concerts for the blind, their families and friends. The real object of these was to furnish pretexts for us to gather together in the Paris district. Some friends were arrested; some were confined for as long as four years; one is still in a camp in Germany; one young man was shot; one war-blinded man was burned; a celebrated blind barrister died as a result of German ill-treatment; I myself was denounced last August, and it was only the speed with which events moved at that time which saved me.

To-day we are happy to have done all we could, and to have held out till the complete liberation of the suffering nations and the assured victory of the Allied Cause.

EMPLOYMENT NOTES

Back at Work.

It is very often possible for newly-blind people to return to the same work as that on which they were engaged prior to their loss of sight. This is encouraged by the National Institute for the Blind Employment Section, and assistance to this end has been given in several cases recently.

Within two or three months of the onset of blindness a railway engineer has been placed on engineering work with a firm at Earl's Court, and is already so efficient that he is

able to earn 100% production bonus in addition to his standing wage.

An iron-worker at Ilkeston, has, after only a few months' blindness, been reinstated in his own job with his former employers, and is a thoroughly useful member of the staff.

Hoover, Ltd., have recently taken back into their employ Mr. A. R. Creswick who, when fully-sighted, was engaged on automatic machine tool-setting. Now, as an Inspector in the Viewing Room, he continues in useful employment in familiar surroundings with his old friends and colleagues.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

This Pity

SIR,—I read with great interest the article "This Pity," by Charles James, in the March NEW BEACON. How right he is—how infuriating those sighted people must be who treat the blind as if they were deaf or even dead!

There is, however, one point which Mr. James has not mentioned. Not all blind people have his admirable spirit, and we sighted who have gone on the lines of treating blind people as normal have often met with misunderstanding. I should say that this is more often the case with those blind from infancy than with those who have lost their sight later, but to prove that there is no rule about it, I should like to describe three cases, two blind from infancy and one blinded in early manhood.

1. Charming, well-educated girl—a real friend. I treat her as normal and she likes it. But one day (owing to ignorance of how things work) she interferes with one of my schemes—with the best intentions but disastrous results. I still treat her as normal—tell her how she has upset things, and ask her plainly to mind her own business. She flies into an ungovernable rage. Why? No one has ever said anything to her except "How wonderful you are!" and she simply can't take it. Here it may be the fault of her relations, who have not allowed her to be normal.

2. Pleasant, well-educated young man. We have met and talked; his father treats him as if he were made of glass. We transact business. All is well until he sends a most misleading letter (it turns out to be the fault of his secretary) and I give him an ordinary "rap over the knuckles." Oh dear! He is not the sort to fly into a rage, but according to his secretary (who calls him "the poor thing") he is weeping into a large handkerchief. Of course we say we are sorry, but never again will we treat him as an ordinary person.

3. Uneducated last-war-blinded man. Wal-lows in it. Leans heavily all along the road. Expects seat to be given in buses. Has embarrassing scene with news-vendor who has unfortunately sized him up. Would be most offended if I treated him as anything but a poor dear.

Now these three are a very different kettle of fish from Mr. James. I hope they are rare. We have to put them on a sort of mental

"black-list," and watch our step with them. I believe the right course is to treat all blind people as naturally as possible until you get some such jolt as described above, and *after that* make the annoying allowances which Mr. James so rightly resents.

Perhaps if friends and relations in particular acted on these lines, we should meet far fewer of the types of blind people I have tried to describe.

Yours, etc.,

MARFY.

To the Editor.

SIR,—On picking up the current issue of THE NEW BEACON I read the lamentations of yet another blind man who complains of being treated too kindly by those who have eyesight, and resenting angrily that anyone should declare him to be clever.

I want to say at the outset that I think blind men are adopting a foolish policy in giving vent to their feelings, and for advocating a sort of standardised behaviour for the sighted towards those who are blind.

It is *not* every blind man who is able to light and smoke a pipe or cigarette as well as the person with sight, and to do so, I would say, is something in the nature of an achievement. To my way of thinking, a hospital nurse may respond to genuine feelings of admiration and has the right to do so without running the gauntlet of withering sarcasm from a man who has allowed himself to become a victim to an inferiority complex as the result of an affliction which he is the first to acclaim "has left him a normal being."

Independence is a laudable quality for which to strive, but in the matter of making a good show at dinner, I suggest that to have an understanding friend at one's elbow who is kind enough to cut the bone out of a pork chop is very comforting. The sensible thing to do when such an offer is made is to accept it with good grace.

Any man or woman who is able to hold down a job in a satisfactory manner despite the lack of eyesight surely merits admiration. We know, of course, that such positions can only be held by virtue of general ability, plus judicious and zealous effort; and are understanding enough in human conduct to know that only those without living experiences with blind folk would be likely, in their astonishment, to pass audible comment on seeing the expert blind

shorthand typist at work. At the risk of offending my fellows, I will say to all shorthand typists, if they have a post on a par with the seeing, "Gobble up just as much commendation as you can, for to-morrow you may be called on to compete for your job. Be glad in your hearts and rejoice, for many are called, but few chosen."

The well-conducted public house is, in my view, a good institution. Among the regular patrons is to be found a sort of camaradie which is absent elsewhere. In normal times, numbers of these establishments counted a blind man with the regular patrons. It would be Blind Jack, Charlie, or perhaps Dick. In any case, the blind man would be accepted on his merits: that is to say, on his ability to mix with his fellows. Blind Jack could take a corner at a game of dominoes, spin a yarn, discuss football or racing, and able to drink a pint. Now it is obvious that a blind man of culture might be out of place in such company, but it would be a mistake on his part to conclude that such company did him wrong if they used and treated him differently to Blind Jack. In other words, the cultured gentleman must either amend his outlook on life, or else confine his perambulations to those of his own immediate circle of friends who understand, and are prepared to pander to, his demands for carefully thought out methods of approach.

Personally, I get a real kick out of life by accepting people for what they are, no matter from what walk of life they come. I realise that we blind people are as different in our make-up as are those who have sight; and that the next poor chap to be helped over the road may be hard of hearing. So I do not object in the slightest if my guide shouts in my ear, "Lift your foot up, old man, you're coming to a kerb." Neither do I shake the dear old lady off my arm when she insists upon acting as my guide, saying, "Ah! I never mind helping the afflicted, I'll see you right to your work, I know where you go." Slow and hesitating as may be her gait, I just accept her help and company in the spirit in which it is given.

A few weeks ago I had boarded a crowded train in the Underground and was standing with others squeezed tightly between the sliding doors. A man who was rough of voice and speech spotted me and called to his pal who was some distance along the coach, "Hi, 'Arry, find him a seat," the while grabbing me by the shoulder and pushing me in front of him to exhibit my blindness to 'Arry. With a half whistle, half hiss, as if to satisfy 'Arry as to my right to a seat, he gave vent to "Psst, blind!"

If this had happened during the early days of my blindness, I am sure I should have felt most uncomfortable, and very annoyed by such behaviour; but to-day, I realise that this man was moved to action on behalf of a weaker member of the community, and that he did it in the way he knew best. One could not doubt his sincerity, and I murmured a quiet word of thanks as 'Arry winked a youngster out of a seat to make room for me. This man is representative of a type who just could not alter their outlook on certain kinds of afflicted people. Their behaviour does not conform to any man-made code of rules; it is spontaneous in its endeavour to serve, and I would be very sorry to oblige this or any other man to act a part simply to suit my blindness.

During each working week I meet literally dozens of regular travellers who have become companions, and they know me for what I am—robust in outlook, cheery for the most part, capable of taking a joke made against me as well as giving a quick answer, able to indulge in small talk, and even prepared to tender a little advice; each to suit the occasion. These people are not merely individuals to me, they are a part of my life. Hilda or Jean, the gentleman with the beautifully toned bass voice or the Viennese lady, fill whole vistas of my mind with varying scenes of life, and it would be my loss if, to suit me, any of them made an effort in their approach to me because of my blindness. For my own part, I am always the same person to my companions—glad to be helped in any circumstances if it makes for happiness and a breadth of companionship.

We must learn to rid ourselves of that inferiority complex, and be our natural selves, and allow others the same privilege. We will not succeed in attracting all whom we might wish, for I believe certain types of blind people attract certain types of seeing folk. So don't let us continue to cry in the wilderness like lost sheep, but jump into life, whether we be poor man, rich man, beggar, or thief.

Yours, etc.,

F. BURVILLE.

To the Editor.

SIR,—Many of your blind readers will be delighted to read the article "This Pity" in your March number by Charles James. Most of us, I believe, will agree with all his remarks. There is one other kind action, or shall I say, well-meant action, which I do wish sighted folk would not do. I happen to be living in an hotel and, until visitors learn of my idiosyncracies, they will for ever be saying, "Allow me to open the door for you," and this in spite of the fact

that my arms and legs are quite normal. The result, of course, is that (a) I probably bump my nose against the edge of the open door and (b) I wave my hands about wildly in everlasting space and, as likely as not, trip over the mat outside. Oh, if only they would leave us alone and let us open our doors for ourselves when we know exactly where we are! Now my wise friends will shut a door in my face and they have learnt that this is the kindest thing they can do. Strange how circumstances alter cases!

Some years ago I had the pleasure of getting five blind girls into a certain factory after the Directors had scoffed at the very idea and refused even to consider it. But they had a wise Manager who eventually persuaded his Board to let him try the experiment for six months. In less than three months these girls were beating their sighted mates at their own game and they went on the permanent staff. Now all is different, thanks largely to the National Institute for the Blind, as can be seen from pages 45 and 46 of your March number. But, after some experience, I would beg all concerned to bear in mind that the blind differ in ability and mental outlook as the sighted, and that although a would-be employee may prove a dead failure at one job, he may prove a brilliant success at another. It by no means follows that because Mr. James succeeded as a telephone operator he would have been a success at the bench. I suggest that your correspondent W. Scrimgeour might ponder on this point and not lay blame where possibly no blame is deserved. Let him try, try, try again until he finds his particular niche which no doubt is waiting for him somewhere. Good luck to him.

It is just the same with games. Some of my friends play chess or bridge and read their Braille fluently while, although I was fairly good at chess when I could see the board, now I am not clever enough. But possibly I can play the 'cello better than they can. It was a sighted man who was asked if he could play the fiddle and replied that he didn't know; he had never tried!

We are going to see great things from this fine Disabled Persons Employment Act, but let none attempt to push square pegs into round holes. It will only be waste of time.

One more word on the preference for being deaf rather than blind. Being fond of music I would infinitely prefer being blind to being deaf, while an artist friend, like the correspondent you quoted in your March issue, thanked God he was not blind but only stone deaf. It all depends on the shape of your head and its inside.

I cannot stop without heartily congratulating you, Sir, on the splendid way in which you maintain the high quality of your paper.

Yours, etc.,

G.E.F.

P.S.—Kipling sums up the idea I have tried to put forward like this:—

*But the World is wondrous large, seven seas from marge
to marge,
And it holds a vast of various kinds of Man;
And the wildest dreams of Kew are the facts in Katmandhu,
And the crimes of Clapham chaste in Martaban!
Here's my wisdom for your use as I learned it when the
moose
And the reindeer roared where Paris roars to-night;
There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays,
And every single one of them is right.*

To the Editor.

International Co-operation.

SIR,—I was very much interested in what you had to say about international co-operation in the February issue of THE NEW BEACON, and particularly the suggestion that blind people should be encouraged to study modern languages. I hope the National Institute will develop the idea, although the response may be very disappointing at first. It is an idea which is not as yet familiar to blind people as a whole and the demand for language courses will need to be stimulated by advertisement and perhaps a little preliminary personal canvassing.

A very ambitious programme of courses which might be prepared and published in Braille is suggested, but if only three or four languages are actually tackled and mastered, something worth while will have been achieved. Incidentally, I should like to see German placed much earlier on the list, as its international usefulness is most certainly not confined to direct intercourse with Germany. The suggestion that the courses could be published in periodical instalments is a good one and something similar to the "Teach Yourself" series published by the English Universities Press would probably be most suitable. In some instances there are societies for developing cultural relations between ourselves and the countries concerned. In order to keep the cost of the language courses low, it might perhaps be possible to approach these societies for a grant towards the cost of publication or for other help with this work. As you remark, the effect of any sectional actions always extends beyond the sections concerned.

As far as London students are concerned, the London County Council are only too anxious to accept blind students at their afternoon and evening classes, and a great deal can be learned

from attendance at a class for the seeing, even if some of the work, done directly with the text-books, has to be missed. Sometimes there may even be an advantage that memory work cannot be scamped by too much reliance on the printed page! For learning to speak a foreign language it is essential to hear it spoken by a native, and I think it should be quite possible to get a good bit of voluntary help in this direction, especially now when we have, and shall have for several years, quite a large refugee population.

Finally, I should like to suggest that quite apart from its purpose as an adventure in international understanding, the mastery of a language might easily have a utilitarian aspect for the blind student. There is much translation work done in offices here in England, which could be quite well done by blind people. I myself can speak from experience of one office where it was the custom for each translator to dictate all his translations into English to a

shorthand-typist who had to have at least an elementary knowledge of the language concerned. It would be quite possible (and economically justifiable) in the case of a blind translator for the typist to read the foreign script a sentence at a time for translation. Very good salaries are paid for this work, especially for technical translation. This latter is not so difficult as it sounds, as nearly all technical expressions are international in any case, and translate themselves. A few months' stay in the country whose language has been studied would be sufficient to give the confidence required, and exchange visits between blind people in various countries could and ought to be arranged, both for this purpose and for the international co-operation which you advocate.

I sincerely think that the active interest of the blind community in these matters is worth working and waiting for.

Yours, etc.,

M.E.K.

ON HER BLINDNESS

By MARJORIE EDEN.

*"And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless..."* (Milton.)

WHEN in my early twenties my sight began rapidly to deteriorate, the worst part was that I could no longer read, for I have always loved books.

I did not immediately learn Braille, because that seemed to be giving in to blindness, and for a long time I entertained hopes of recovering my sight. During this dark patch came a ray of light. My brother made me a wireless set. Now, I scarcely had a dull moment, as I listened to practically everything that came along. Sir Ian Fraser says that wireless might have been specially invented for the blind, and through its medium came a blaze of light. Music has always given me pleasure, but I knew little of the masters. One day I heard the late Sir Walford Davies say that to appreciate them one must listen to all the good music which came one's way. I did so, and now thrill to the titan chords of Beethoven, and the heart-aching melodies of Chopin.

When at last I became resigned to the fact that I should never again read the printed page, I obtained the address of the National Institute for the Blind from a Christmas appeal for wireless sets by Winston Churchill. To Great Portland Street I wrote, asking for a book from which I could learn Braille. They sent

me "How to Learn to Read." Just as soon as I had mastered the rudiments of the Braille system, I sent a list to the National Library for the Blind, and the first book I received was Conrad's "Victory"!

*"Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken."*

I don't know the procedure for canonisation, but my vote goes to St. Louis of Coupvray. With the aid of his six dots I've travelled the world over—taken the Golden Road to Samarkand; journeyed across the desert with T. E. Lawrence, when the heat "cut like the blade of a sword," gone with him into Damascus after the victorious Arabs, where the delirious crowds showered flowers from their balconies into the slowly-moving cars, and cheered Masir and Aurans; made a "passage" to India with his friend, E. M. Forster; battled round the Cape of Good Hope once on our beam ends with Conrad's "Nigger of the Narcissus"; sailed out of Nantucket with Ahab in search of the terrible white whale, Moby Dick. In the Far East, H. M. Tomlinson introduced me to a cultured Chinese, who read our Western philosophers, and permitted me to hold his priceless treasures.

Some might say I indulged in escapist literature. If that means going out of a world of darkness into one of gay colours, why not?

I also keep abreast of the times by reading the *Digests* and the *Braille Mail*. The *Braille Radio Times* makes me a power in the home. There I try to pull my weight. I make and serve each morning the early tea, which they say is the best cup of the day. They do not know that, like Dr. Johnson's blind housekeeper, Mrs. Williams, I have to place my finger lightly at the top of the cup to tell when it is full. My bedmaking and washing up is highly praised, but that may be to egg me on!

Sir Ian Fraser has been an inspiration to me, and many are the services which he has rendered to the blind. My people did not much like my going out alone, but when I quoted Sir Ian's remark that "it is risky, but if we prefer it to staying indoors, why not take the risk?" they dropped their objections. An invention which he helped to perfect has given me much happiness—the Talking Book.

If, via Braille, I have gone to the Middle and Far East, the Talking Book has taken me to the New World. With Francis Parkman I blazed the Oregon Trail, living with the Indians in their lodges, or taking part in a mad, wild buffalo hunt. Parkman eventually went blind. From an American recording I learned the story of Anne Sullivan Macey who is, perhaps, one of the world's greatest teachers. As a child she was practically blind, and after a dreadful period when she lived in a poor-law institution, she had the good fortune to be rescued and educated at the Perkins Institute.

Her sight was gradually restored by operations, but she was often in pain, and in later years it failed. But to return to her teaching, when she was eighteen she went to be the governess of Helen Keller, aged four, who was blind, deaf and dumb. The child was almost wild, and utterly spoiled, but Anne Sullivan was given a free hand, and through her influence and the manual alphabet, the sadly afflicted little American girl became a highly educated and famous woman.

I, too, wanted to teach. I felt I had that one talent which is death to hide—and from America, and through the National Institute for the Blind, my chance came. Soon after this war began, the latter organisation compiled a register of those willing to help the blind in many ways. I said I'd like to teach Braille. Soon they wrote that through the generosity of the British War Relief Society of America a house had been given to them at Torquay. This was to be run as a Home of Recovery and Rehabilitation for War-blinded Civilians, and I was invited to help with the teaching of Braille and Moon. I have worked there ever since, to my great happiness and gain.

The house, America Lodge, stands in a lovely garden round which one can take a walk along a railed path. On the sun porch, nearly all the year round, will be found a happy crowd, busy with handicrafts or reading and writing. From the gym I hear talks of long distance cycling feats. and of a temperamental camel which I have never dared to approach.

The staff is splendid; each member seems to regard his work as something more than just a job. But perhaps it is the residents who inspire them. I could write a book, and perhaps one day I will, about the brave people I've come to know during these three years. One young man, whose disability was enhanced by the loss of nearly all his fingers, became an excellent typist, and is now training to become a telephonist, which, says Sir Ian, is the job par excellence for the blind. And a small boy, aged eight, with an added handicap—the loss of a hand—was soon able to read and write Braille. My "Head" who has had much experience with blind children, said we need not trouble him yet with all the finer points, but he would not rest till he was reading the same books as the men. One day I asked him what he would like to be when he grew up. "A poet," was the reply, and he recited to me "The Owl." All that I can remember is:

"... There it is!
I see it whiz
Into the old oak tree."

Another contact which has illuminated my philosophy was with a totally blind home teacher from Wales. He said that he considered he was fortunate to have lost his sight when a boy. He led a full and happy life, and, but for his accident, he would have had to become a miner, for which he had no inclination. And so, for some of us perhaps? "I will give unto thee the treasures of darkness."

PERSONALIA

A pleasing ceremony took place at a Social on March 28th, when MISS GWEN REAVLEY, Home Teacher at Middlesbrough, was presented with a bouquet of daffodils, purse and savings certificates, from the blind people, as a token of their appreciation and esteem for her 20 years work among them. Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Powell, both blind, made the presentation on behalf of their blind friends.

* * *

Mr. F. C. GOODEY, A.R.C.O., A.T.C.L., the blind musician, has been appointed organist at St. Peter's, Limsfield.

CO-ORDINATED ACTION ON NATIONAL INSURANCE

IN an Editorial article last January, we made the point that the question of National Insurance is a test-case by which the effectiveness of the machinery of co-ordination can be judged. It is, therefore, gratifying that a real measure of agreement has been reached on the amendments required to adapt the White Paper proposals for the needs of the blind. Complete unanimity would be too much to expect; certain details are still matters of opinion; but the necessity of a Handicap Pension for the blind is fully agreed by all who are engaged in the practical tasks of Blind Welfare. Our business now is to put the case for it to the Minister of National Insurance with all the strength that Blind Welfare can command.

In normal times and with co-ordination in full working order, each of the Regions would have convened a Conference to give full consideration to such a major question of policy as this. Any Resolutions passed by such Conferences would have been referred to the National Body for action. It is satisfactory in the circumstances that the two larger Regions, the Southern and the Northern, were able to convene well-attended Conferences, which demonstrated a very large measure of agreement on the essential issues. The Western Counties Association and the Wales and Monmouthshire Regional Council expressed their views through their Committees in general accord with the Resolutions of the Conferences held elsewhere. The National Institute had before it admirable reports of the Southern and Northern Conferences, as well as the Resolutions of Regional Committees, and was able to combine them with Memoranda from organisations of blind persons and notes from other sources which endorsed the demand for a Handicap Pension and urged the Institute to take definite action in representing the views of the blind community to Parliament.

The Resolutions resulting finally from this process are: (i) that the inclusion of the blind in the Social Insurance Scheme is welcome; (ii) that the benefits proposed in Part I of the White Paper on Social Insurance, in respect of all blind persons other than War or Industrial Pensioners, are not sufficient for the needs of the blind, and that the proposals for augmenting them are not satisfactory; (iii) that every person registered as blind, and not within the responsibility of an Educational Authority, should receive a National Handicap Pension (additional to earnings and/or Insurance benefits), at a flat rate which, so long as the rates of benefit at present set out in the White Paper obtain, should be £1 per week; (iv) that the National Handicap Pension, being designed to meet the blind person's extra cost of living, should not be subject to means test, and that it be paid from National funds.

A Deputation has been appointed to wait on the Minister of National Insurance. It includes representatives of each of the Regions and of the numerous other organisations represented on the Institute's Council and it will consist largely of blind persons, who are the most effective advocates of their own case. The Deputation will be introduced to Sir William Jowitt by three Members of Parliament, representing the three main political Parties, who are members of the Institute's Council.

Some of our readers may be disappointed that the Institute is not taking this opportunity of raising other questions affecting the future of Blind Welfare, but we believe that an overwhelming majority will applaud the wisdom of concentrating on the single, crucial issue of the Handicap Pension. It is a matter of secondary importance whether the Pension is paid from the Insurance Fund, through a minute increase in the rates of contribution generally, or from a special fund financed from the Treasury. So long as it is administered nationally, to avoid local inequalities and the hitherto insoluble problem of chargeability, it does not greatly matter which Ministry pays it, provided that the mode of payment is not such that it will endanger the independence of the blind, or their status in the community.

An important feature of the proposal, which should increase its attractiveness for the Ministry, is that it would form the basis of an improved system of augmenting earnings entirely consistent with the principles of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act. A sum of 20s. per week will not, in itself, be sufficient for all workshop employees (the average augmentation for 1943-44 was 30s. per worker), but it will bring the problem of workshop augmentation down to manageable size, so that it can be dealt with by the Ministry of Labour on lines similar to those followed under the Interim scheme. The main value of the proposal, however, lies in its application to blind workers (at present more than 5,000 in number) who are not employed in workshops or on home-workers schemes. As

PARTIAL SIGHT

By an *OPHTHALMIC SURGEON*

Notes for the guidance of workers concerned with the placement of partially sighted persons in industry.

IT is to be realised that the term "partially sighted" includes two categories of person, namely, those whose sight is so poor that they are registrable under the Blind Persons' Act although they are not totally blind (i.e., unable to distinguish light from darkness) and those who are not so handicapped as this, but who have not full normal sight and cannot be given it by the aid of spectacles.

Four factors are concerned in determining the type of work for which a partially sighted person is suitable:—

- 1.—The temperament and intelligence of the person.
- 2.—The amount of central sight present.
- 3.—The size of the field of vision.
- 4.—The probable cause of the eye disease from which the person is suffering and the possible effect of the proposed work on this.

These four points need explanation.

1.—The first point is more or less self-evident. The will to succeed in the face of a handicap is essential, while the greater the general intelligence, the powers of memory and concentration and the capacity for inference and improvisation, the greater the chance of success at any level of sight. It must also be remembered that an adult suddenly becoming partially blind is at first more handicapped than a person who has been in the same condition from infancy, and also that on the whole the older the person at the onset of the disability, the greater the handicap. Nevertheless, the experience gained during the sighted period is of value in interpreting the imperfect sensations received after the onset of the disability.

2.—It must be understood that the act of seeing is not a simple one, but involves various different sensations. If we fix our eyes on a single word in a page of print we see the word we are looking at clearly (this is "central vision"), but we also see the rest of the print on the page in a blurred sort of way and we are also conscious of objects around us beyond the edges of the book (this is "peripheral vision"). We also see the colours of objects, more brightly the nearer they are to the central thing that we are looking at. When a person's eyesight is tested by asking him to read letters of varying sizes at a certain distance it is central vision which is being tested.

Good central vision is essential for reading and writing and for all fine work. In certain diseases the peripheral part of the sight functions, but there is a blind spot in the centre, so that small objects and letters in a book disappear when the person looks straight at them. Persons with poor central vision can walk about comfortably and do not require guides, but they cannot do fine visual work, and if the central blind spot is so large that it blots out a letter $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. high at 10 ft. the person is generally certifiably blind, although he may be able to go about anywhere alone. A person with this type of defective sight is able to do many fine jobs; for example, minute assembly, in which the gross sorting is done by sight, but the fine manipulations, such as screw driving and threading of nuts is done by touch. The grades of central sight as charted by the doctor are shown below, together with their equivalents in terms of capacity for seeing distant and near objects in ordinary life, the patient wearing the best spectacles possible. In all cases it is taken that the peripheral vision is normal and the person can walk about unaided.

Charted vision	Distant vision capacity	Near vision capacity
6/24	Able to read bus and tram route numbers at 25 ft.	Can read newspaper headlines, clear print and smaller print with slight strain. Can do all ordinary work, but not fine detail work.
6/36	Can read as above, but only up to about 20 ft.	As above.
6/60	Can only see large letters such as bus numbers and station names at 12-18 ft. General haziness of all outlines, but large objects visible.	Can only read newspaper headlines. Not suitable for any work entailing reading, writing or discrimination of detail.

People in the above categories are visually handicapped, but not certifiably blind. Sight worse than this is as follows:—

Charted vision	Distant vision capacity	Near vision capacity
3/60	Large letters only seen at 3 ft. All outlines blurred and distant objects not discernible. Can walk about in a room but will find difficulty in crossing roads alone.	Unable to read even large print. Headlines may sometimes be read with a magnifying glass.

1/60 or less	No distance vision or worth anything and will find it difficult to avoid obstacles. Will rely on hearing and stick.	No discrimination at all. Will rely on touch alone.
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These two categories are certifiably blind, and can only do work for which eyesight is not essential. Nevertheless the small amount of sight present may be of value in discriminating larger detail.

Any of the people in all of the categories may also be unable to distinguish colour accurately, and this will be an additional handicap.

3.—The field of vision is that part of the outside world which is visible at any one time. As we have seen, it has a central part which has normally a high discrimination for detail and a peripheral part in which objects are seen less and less clearly the farther they are from the centre. The peripheral part of the field has good discrimination for moving objects and normally functions better than the central part in very poor light, such as a starlit night. It is with the peripheral field that we move about without falling over things. In some diseases the peripheral field only functions in very bright light and the person becomes blind in dim light. This is night blindness and of course makes it difficult to move about in poorly lit places or at night.

In other diseases there are large parts of the peripheral field which do not function at all in any light. In these cases the person may see what he is actually looking at, but nothing else. He will therefore trip over steps and run into things, though he may see reasonably well with his central vision. Such people cannot be given jobs entailing walking about among moving machinery without assistance, though they may do bench work reasonably well if they can sit still at it.

It may be necessary to make a rough test of the field of vision, as details of this are not always supplied with the case history. Two rough-and-ready methods may be tried. First, a number of white and coloured objects about half an inch square or less (e.g., pieces of paper) should be scattered over the floor over an area about four feet square. If the person to be tested can pick them all up rapidly without missing any he has no serious peripheral field defect. If he misses the ones at the edge or only finds them slowly by hunting about he has a contracted field. A variant of this is to have a lot of small tables and stools scattered about the room and to ask the patient to walk rapidly across the room and back, noticing how well he threads his way among them.

Secondly, a rough estimate of the size of the

central loss of field can be got by holding a newspaper up at 12 inches from the eye (all tests should be performed with one eye at a time) and asking the person to point to the area of print which is missing (if the loss is central), or to state whether the edge of the paper can be seen all round (if a peripheral loss is suspected). A similar test can be done by getting the patient to stare straight at the examiner, who then moves his hand about in various parts of the field, the patient saying when it is seen and when it disappears.

Some people have poor central vision and also a contracted field of vision, some have one or the other. . . . It is important to find out which is the case, in order to decide whether a bench job or a moving about one can be undertaken. If the peripheral field is contracted and central vision good, relatively fine work can be given, but if both are bad, the person must be treated as blind and given a tactual job only.

Remember that a blind spot in the field blots out a larger object the farther away that object is. We become aware of this increasing size of field for a given angular distance when we note how the target at 200 yards is blotted out by the rifle sight, which is actually many times smaller than it.

4.—It is important to know something of the causes of the common forms of poor sight, because some of them may be made worse by various kinds of work. For example, diseases in which there is bleeding (hæmorrhages into any part of the eye) or in which some displacement and loosening of parts has taken place (detachment of the retina or dislocation of the lens, for example) are made worse by hard muscular work, such as lifting weights or excessive bending and stretching or violent active movements of any kind. Other conditions, especially some kinds of short sight, are made worse by trying to see fine detail. It is obvious that it is undesirable to put people on the jobs which may impair what little sight they have.

The following are some of the commoner diseases which lead to visual handicap:—

- i. Macular degeneration. Patient has a central blind area which will prevent him doing fine work, but will have a full peripheral field, and so will be able to move about freely. He often sees better in dim lights. The disease is stationary.
- ii. Glaucoma. The patient will possibly see fairly well centrally but will have a very small peripheral field and so cannot walk about easily. This is a progressive disease and often ends in total blindness. Excessive close work may hasten this.

- iii. Retinitis pigmentosa. The first sign of this is loss of the peripheral field in dim lights (night blindness). It is a slowly progressive disease and as it gets worse a brighter and brighter light is required and finally the field is contracted even in bright daylight. It may end in total blindness, but is not made worse by attempting to use what sight remains. Cataract may occur as a complication.
- iv. Progressive myopia, or excessive short sight. This can for a time be corrected by spectacles. When it is severe enough to constitute a visual handicap there is often loss of central vision. There is a great risk of detachment of the retina and these patients are unsuitable for heavy manual labour and for fine work, other than tactile.
- v. Detached retina. This leads to extreme distortion and blurring of all objects, often with loss of part of the field of vision. Heavy manual work must not be given. Work entailing tactile discrimination and not requiring sight at all is best.
- vi. Cataract. This leads to increasing haziness and dimness of sight over the whole field without any actual blind areas. It is always

worse if the light shines directly on the patient's eyes and is better if he works with the face in the shadow and a bright light focused on the work. Sight can often be improved by an operation. Use of what sight there is does no harm.

- vii. Choroditis. This leads to a patchy loss of the field of vision, often only parts of objects being visible. The patient can usually walk about, but central vision may be poor. It is not usually progressive.
- viii. Keratitis and corneal scars. These conditions produce a general haziness and distortion of everything without any actually blind areas in the field of vision. It is often worse in bright light. Usually stationary. War wounds and industrial accidents often lead to visual handicaps of this nature.
- ix. Optic atrophy. This, if complete, implies total blindness. If incomplete, leads to dimming of everything with partial or complete colour blindness and often a contracted field and poor central vision. If the patient can see to get about a magnifying glass may help in seeing detail, but usually tactile work should be advised.

MUSIC AND INTELLIGENCE

By M. BLAKE, Headmaster, Court Grange School.

COURT GRANGE SCHOOL for Retarded Blind Children has again had the honour of sending a pupil to the Royal Normal College of Music, when Edward Whatford, A.L.C.M., aged sixteen, began what promises to be a very successful course of training there this term. Whatford was admitted to the School in 1935 at the age of seven. He soon showed good musical ability and passed the successive Associated Board examinations without difficulty, ultimately gaining his A.L.C.M. Diploma in July this year. He is the second pupil of Mr. B. Slee, the School's blind music specialist, to reach the Diploma standard, succeeding Robert Eves, who was awarded his A.L.C.M. at the youngest permissible age and gained his L.R.A.M. after two and a half years of additional work at the College.

Visitors to the School often ask the question: "How is it possible for pupils at a school for retarded children to acquit themselves so well at music examinations?" After a good deal of discussion on this topic during the past five years, during which forty-six successes have

been recorded in Associated Board examinations and two A.L.C.M. diplomas have been awarded, the writer has reached the conclusion that musicianship is a specific ability which may be found in a child with very little general ability. Given a skilful and gifted teacher and a keen desire to learn, almost any child who has fair control over his hands can learn to play simple tunes on the piano and can develop a reasonably good musical ear. Retarded intelligence is a handicap, not a disqualification.

Experience at Court Grange has proved repeatedly that "dull" children, unless they are tone-deaf or have exceptionally poor muscular co-ordination, can reach the standard of proficiency required by the Grade Three examination. Even the dumbest are capable of playing easy pieces like Carroll's "Scenes at a Farm." The School Choir, a dozen boys and girls, displayed enough musicianship in the December examination last year to gain a Distinction Certificate in Grade V. Clearly, then, success in music examinations is not proportional to the general intelligence of the performers. The

combined efforts of our choir would never gain them a distinction in any subject depending mainly upon intelligence. They can grasp simple facts but are incapable of making any but the most obvious deductions.

A careful study of the type of question asked in the earlier Associated Board examinations reveals that only musical ability is tested. The candidate is asked questions demanding one specific answer each. A child of subnormal intelligence can be trained to recognise, say, a major triad or to distinguish between a major and a minor chord, provided he has some musical ability, as readily as he can tell red from yellow (assuming he has vision). One of our least intelligent girls was incapable of learning Braille and was unemployable when she left school. Yet she gained a distinction in the Grade I Singing examination, presenting an unmistakable case of musical ability dissociated from general intelligence.

Our more advanced pupils are fairly intelligent, though always subnormal when they are admitted. The retarded child, discouraged by defeat in the unequal struggle for recognition among normally-intelligent children, gradually gains confidence and self-respect under the

fairer conditions in a Special School. His scanty achievements are generously praised and the fullest development of his ability is encouraged. A helpful factor in the development of confidence is the fortnightly concert, organised by the children in turn, in which everyone, however meagre his talent, has an opportunity to display it and to receive applause. Frequently unsuspected ability comes to light, and the performers gain valuable practice in playing to an audience.

It is surprising to find how vigorously the theory that musical ability can exist distinct from intelligence is contested by some teachers of music. The present writer would be the last to disparage musicians in general or to suggest for a moment that they are unintelligent. No musician would deny that a highly intelligent person may be utterly devoid of musical ability. Why, then, should not musical ability exist in at least a modest degree with low intelligence? The experience of Court Grange School children, who, under Mr. Slee's gifted and painstaking teaching, have wrested 141 certificates from the Associated Board since 1932, proves beyond doubt that it does so exist.

A COURAGEOUS STRUGGLE

HERE is the story of a courageous struggle against oncoming blindness. It is the story of a man who does not wish his name to be published, so we will call him Joe Tanner. For two years after the last war, in which Joe served as a soldier, he worked on his own, driving a motor lorry. Then he realised that he was going blind, so he had to give up his business and went back to the job of his youth, work on the farm. But it was not long before he found that he couldn't see enough even to work on the land, so, nothing daunted, he thought he would try work down the pit at a local colliery, supposing that in the darkness of the mine he would be on equal terms with his work mates. He managed to get on the night shift and each evening travelled four miles to his work. To avoid being seen by too many miners, some of whom might spot the condition of his sight, he plodded across fields to the colliery yard, crossing the reservoir by crawling on hands and knees along a plank, and groping his way to the lamp shop. A lamp was of little use to him, but he always took one to escape observation. His work was "packing dirt"—to use the Lancashire term—and for some months he managed fairly well.

One night, Joe was the first to get out of the cage at the bottom of the pit. He stumbled and fell. A pile of rails had been placed there ready for removal to the far end of the mine, and he had failed to spot them. But a colliery fireman had spotted Joe's stumble, and "You'll be breaking your neck or somebody else's if you don't look where you're going," he growled.

All that night Joe was quiet, and when he stopped for breakfast his mates commented on his silence. He made no reply. He had a feeling that his days in the pit were numbered.

Joe was right. The next day, a Friday, he went up for his wages and the good-natured contractor who had taken him on told him he was sorry to tell him that he was sacked—sacked because of his blindness. He advised Joe to go to the nearest Blind Society and see what they could do for him.

Joe went, and he was sent away to learn brush-making. He is now fully employed in a North of England workshop, receiving full trade union rates of wages.

And Joe is happy and contented.

A CLASS APART

Reprinted from "The Lantern."

By GABRIEL FARRELL,

Director, Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind.

CONSIDERABLE concern is being expressed (in America) over the extent of special legislation for the blind.

Interest in adequate provisions for the war-blinded focused attention on the many bills introduced into Congress for the benefit of the sightless. Prior to the Social Security Act practically all national legislation pertaining to blindness was for the benefit of institutions rather than for individuals. Since then there has been an increasing trend toward bills which afford direct benefit to blinded persons. These range from an amendment to the Income Tax Law, which permits blind persons to claim reductions up to \$500 for personal services, to the Social Security Act which provides \$25,000,000 a year for needy blind persons.

Motivation for this legislation reaches from the

feeling that society is under obligation because blindness, largely preventable, has been allowed to prevail, to an attempt on the part of the blind to secure economic parity with the seeing. While all who have the interest of the blind at heart want them to have every aid and opportunity, many blind people are becoming concerned lest this zeal build them into a special class apart from seeing people.

Formerly the blind asked no special consideration beyond adequate training to overcome the loss of sight. Has this aim been lost in the complexity of modern life, or can the blind with good training still stand on their own feet? We will not venture an answer but we think the whole matter needs consideration and clarification by the blind themselves, rather than by workers for the blind.

THE PROBLEM OF THE DEAF-BLIND

It is as a Home Visitor, of fourteen years' standing, that I contribute the following suggestions on this problem.

The article in THE NEW BEACON of November 15th, 1945, seemed to me a most unhelpful approach to the subject. Surely members of the community can help the heavily handicapped by sharing in their burden, and by being willing, to a reasonable extent, to endure the little inconveniences this entails.

During my years of service, I have known, roughly, about twenty blind-deaf people (this does not include the average "hard of hearing"). Of these twenty, at least four were extremely intelligent, and it was possible to hold interesting conversations with them—in one case, by the deaf-blind manual alphabet, and in the other three cases, by suitable ear instruments. Three or four of the others were also above the average in intelligence, but had had no background of education to help them. Several of the twenty were able to do their own housework and so keep employed and interested, and two or three of the men excelled in toy-making and basketry. Two were very old people and bedridden, and I do not think it was possible to do much for them except keep them warm

and comfortable. But I can recollect two people, both of them men, who were certainly a great problem. They refused to try and learn the manual alphabet, no instrument seemed to suit them—though I should here point out that the instruments did not undergo a thorough testing—they were bored and impatient, and thoroughly on their wives' nerves. Now I am convinced, that had I myself had more leisure, and been better trained, I could have done something for both these men, and that had I been able to get each wife away for a good month's holiday, I could have relieved the tension at home. In each case the wives were hard-working women and probably undergoing physiological changes which caused them to get very tired, impatient and irritable. A Home Visitor, with knowledge and leisure, could get members of the family to co-operate in teaching the deaf-blind person to make something of his life, and in each of these cases the wives were quite intelligent and would have been able to help.

My conclusions, therefore, drawn from these experiences, are first, the necessity of better training for the Visitor, secondly the need for Ear Clinics where deaf people can be tested

and, if possible, fitted with a suitable instrument; thirdly, the need for Holiday Homes for hard-working wives and mothers.

An objection may be made to the second conclusion, that the cost of such instruments is high and upkeep very expensive. As a matter of fact, a simple speaking tube, which is not very expensive, will often be found the best ear aid, but in cases where a battery set is needed, then there should be some fund—such as the Wireless for the Blind Fund—to help with the cost of provision and upkeep. In this connection, a clergyman told me that in Wiltshire about twenty deaf people were collected at a centre, and Dr. Phyllis Kerridge, the former well-known aurist, came down armed with various ear aids and testing apparatus, and all but one of this group were fitted with a suitable instrument. But the National Institute for the Deaf stresses the importance of the ear test being made at a hospital such as the Royal Northern Hospital, Holloway, which specialises in the work, and publishes a list of reliable instrument makers.

Another conclusion to which I have come, but which is only remedial in the case of present and future generations of children, is that the better educated a person is, the better he is equipped to overcome any physical handicap that may befall him. It is far easier for someone who has had a good education and been accustomed to reading, to acquire a knowledge of Braille and sign reading, and if a deaf-blind person can enjoy Braille books, he can never be entirely lonely.

B.R.T.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Legislation for U.S.A. Blind.

"Legislation for the Blind," an article in the American magazine "Light," written by Dr. Farrell, Director of Perkins Institution, gives an interesting summary of recent American legislation for the blind; most of it has already been noted from time to time in our pages, but it may be briefly recapitulated here:—

In 1931, Federal funds were made available for free reading material for the adult blind, and the meaning of "reading material" has since been expanded to include Talking Books and the repair of Talking Book machines. In 1935, the Social Security Act made the welfare of the blind the responsibility of every State, and 75,000 blind persons now receive aid—in all States except Delaware and Alaska.

In 1936, legislation authorised the opening of kiosks in Federal Buildings, and two years later an Act was passed, making mandatory the purchase of blind-made goods in Government departments.

In 1943, two wartime measures were passed which affect the blind. One provides for the retraining of those suffering from war injuries, and the other "greatly increases facilities for rehabilitating blind persons."

Finally, in 1944, by an amendment to the Income Tax law, a blind person may claim reduction up to 500 dollars for personal expenses resultant on blindness.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

St. Dunstan's Bridge Team Wins.—A blind team from St. Dunstan's last month beat Mr. H. A. Abraham's team in the Bridge Association handicap tournament by 2,000 points.

Blind Musician's Success.—Sixteen competitors took part in a Marconi Works Employees Talent Competition at the Works Clubroom, Chelmsford, last month. After a very close contest between the leaders, the judges awarded the first prize to Mr. William Webb, a blind employee, who played the accordion.

Blind Domino Champion.—Mr. Forrest Dick, a member of the Larkhall Branch of the National League of the Blind, won the Lanarkshire Outdoor Mission for the Blind Domino Cup, and has been presented with the trophy. He is the first totally blind player to win the cup.

Blinded Soldiers Decorated.—Corporal Harold William Greatrex, R.E., of Penzance, who was blinded last year, has been decorated by the King with the Military Medal. He won his decoration for his energy and determination in placing "guides" for tanks in an advanced position in the enemy lines. In addition to losing his sight, he lost a foot and received severe injuries to the other leg, an arm, and a shoulder. After the investiture, he and his friends were entertained by Sir Ian and Lady Fraser to lunch at the Savoy Hotel.

Blind Music Teacher's Promising Pupils.—A concert in aid of the Red Cross was given at the Senior Girls School Hall, Wood End, Northolt, on March 3rd by the pupils of Miss Violet Kemp, A.R.C.M., the blind music teacher. Pianoforte playing of a high order was demonstrated by all the fifty pupils taking part. Variety was pro-

vided in the form of vocal items, both solo and concerted, recitations and tap dancing. The Mayoress of Ealing showed her interest in the young people by attending and expressed great pleasure at what she heard and saw. She presented the certificates won at recent examinations by twelve of the pupils, including one distinction and several credits. Mrs. Forrest Groves, of the Greater London Fund, introduced the Mayoress and expressed the great pleasure of those present that such honour should be paid to Miss Kemp as a reward for her work.

Miss Kemp should be much more widely known as a teacher. The effort and patience needed and shown by her to provide such a number of promising pupils is a great credit to her.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the deaths of:—

Viscount Dawson of Penn, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.C.L., LL.D., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S. Lord Dawson was President of the Association of Certificated Blind Masseurs, and at the Memorial Service at Westminster Abbey on 20th March, the Association was represented by Dr. L. D. Bailey, C.B., M.R.C.S. (Vice-President of the Association), Mr. H. Michael Whitfield, B.A., C.S.P. (Chairman), Dr. Olive Watkin, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., C.S.P., Mr. W. A. Mitchell, C.S.P. (representing Scottish members), and Mrs. Chaplin-Hall, O.B.E.

James Bulman-Smith, M.A., on 23rd March, at Ventnor. He was born into a well-known family at Barnsley, Yorks. When no more than three months old he was rendered completely blind by a faulty vaccination. Thereafter, his career was an heroic and successful battle with difficulties which surely might have daunted many. He succeeded in an education which took him to Cambridge University and was crowned by an Honours Degree in History. He learnt to play the piano and the organ, and he sang with a well-trained baritone voice. As a chess player he was unusually difficult to beat, and would sometimes have a dozen correspondence games going at a time.

Seeing small prospects of a career for himself in England, and being engaged to be married, he went to Germany as long ago as 1904. Soon he was one of the most successful lecturers and teachers of English in Berlin. He married, settled down there, and for many years led a

life of the utmost activity and usefulness, which included playing the organ at the English church. The 1914-18 war brought difficulties and adventures which ended in his becoming Students' Librarian of the National Library for the Blind in England. As part of his work, he and his talented wife for several years went about giving musical recitals which included a talk by him on blindness and the needs of the blind, and in this way they raised many thousands of pounds for the Library. When Queen Mary visited the Library, he read aloud to her from Braille at her request.

Later Mr. and Mrs. Bulman-Smith returned to Berlin, and remained till another world war drove them out again. This time Mr. Bulman-Smith found scope for his energy by lecturing for the Ministry of Information and Scottish Command in Scotland. Illness compelled him to give this up, and bad health had been his portion latterly—a lot, one may safely surmise, which he found far more difficult to endure than the handicap under which he had laboured so valiantly.

Alfred Lathe, of Penn, aged 76, who for a long period took great interest in the blind, and was until last June President of the Staffordshire Association for the Welfare of the Blind.

CO-ORDINATED ACTION ON NATIONAL INSURANCE.

(Continued from page 67)

plans for full employment mature, it is likely that more blind people will join this category or will wish to branch out in employment on their own account. The independent status which a Pension, free of means test, can alone provide will greatly encourage enterprise, and create conditions under which the blind themselves can adventure into new fields of employment.

To those who are deeply immersed in Blind Welfare, the case for a Pension seems irresistible. It has, however, serious obstacles to overcome, particularly the fear that it would be an embarrassing precedent. There is no need for us to be embarrassed by any such fear; if the case made for the blind is good for other handicapped members of the community, let them benefit thereby. Our chief concern is to secure that, as a result of the new social enactments, the blind shall not suffer. The National Handicap Pension is, in our view, by far the best way of ensuring that end within the main principles of the Insurance Scheme. We hope that the case, which the representative Deputation will put vigorously, will be received, not only sympathetically, but with an understanding of the principle at stake.

THE EDITOR

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The prices of the following pieces of music are net, but represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production.

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19250	Grade 6 (Intermediate)	1	0		

Dances :

19255	Ash, F. I'm Gonna Love that Guy, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	o	6		
19256	Box, Cox and Ida. Choc'late Soldier from the U.S.A., <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	o	6		
19257	Charles, H. Till All Our Prayers are Answered, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	o	6		
19258	Noel, A. If You ever Go to Ireland, <i>Song-Waltz</i>	o	6		

BRaille BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and Blind Individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covered.

Biography :

18878-9 The Microbe Man, by Eleanor Doorly. A life of Pasteur for children, full of exciting events ; the nobleness of the man and his work stirs the heart. 2 vols. 4s. 3d. per vol. F84.

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18310-1 Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment, by Rudolf Steiner. A directly objective course of direct spiritual teaching, as taught by the Anthroposophical Society. 2 vols. 6s. 3d. per vol. F121.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

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Philosophy :		
Cohen, M. R., and Nagel, E. Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method	9	
Sociology and Politics :		
Brogan, D. W. U.S.A. : Outline of the Country, its People and Institutions	2	
Local Government in England and Wales during the Period of Reconstruction (White Paper)	1	
Economics :		
Watkins, E. S. Credit Buying	2	
Law :		
Keeton, G. W. The Law of Trusts (1939)	12	
Classics :		
Xenophon. Oeconomicus, with Translation by E. C. Marchant	3	
History :		
Kellett, E. E. Aspects of History	2	
Nicolson, Harold. Peacemaking, 1919	5	
Smith, G. B. Germany, 1815-1890	3	

APPARATUS.

The prices of the undermentioned articles are increased as from 9th April as under :—

Increases in Prices.

Cat. No.	Article	List Price	Special Price to Blind
9381	Dice Cup	£ s. d. 0 0 3	£ s. d. 0 0 2
9412	Labels—Economy	o 1 0	o 0 8
		per 100	per 100
		post free	post free

New Articles.

9436	Patent Spring Wedges for Pianoforte Tuners — Upright	o 4 6	o 4 6
9437	Do. —Grand	o 4 6	o 4 6

**NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1**

**and
5, St. John Street, Manchester, 8.**

ADDITIONS.

	Vols
Fiction :	
Bailey, H. C. Mr. Fortune Finds a Pig	4
Braddon, George. Few of the Many	5
Brophy, John. Target Island	3
Cheyney, Peter. Another Little Drink	4
Christie, Agatha. Towards Zero	4
Clarke, Isabel. Welcome	6
Dell, Jeffrey. News for Heaven	4
Farjeon, J. Jefferson. House of Shadows	4
Fleury, Barbara Francis. Faith the Root	3
Gibbons, Stella. Ticky	3
*Grossmith, George and Weedon. Diary of a Nobody	2
Jordan, Humphrey. Decency of Hate	4
Lofts, Norah. Michael and All Angels	4
Mackenzie, Compton. Keep the Home Guard Turning	4
Massingham, Hugh. Ripe for Shaking	6
Scarlett, Susan. Summer Pudding	4
Walpole, Hugh. Katherine Christian	6
Juvenile :	
Boylston, Helen Dore. Sue Barton, Superintendent Nurse	3
Lewis, Lorna. Tea and Hot Bombs	4
O'Hara, Mary. My Friend Flicka	5
Miscellaneous :	
Sociology	
Allen, Carleton Kemp. Democracy and the Individual	2
*Noyes, Alfred. Edge of the Abyss	1
Simon, Shena D. Four Freedoms in Secondary Education	1
*Social Insurance, Parts I and II	
Law and Constitution	
*Jennings, W. Ivor. British Constitution	3
Language	
Richards, I. A. Basic English and its Uses	3
Prose and Literature	
Elton, Oliver. Wordsworth	2
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Plays	
Linklater, Eric. Crisis in Heaven	2
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Hay, Ian. Unconquered Isle : The Story of Malta	3
Trevelyan, G. M. English Social History	11
War, 1939	
Winston S. Churchill. Onwards to Victory	6
Ministry of Information. Manpower	2
Sheean, Victor. Between the Thunder and the Sun	7

	Vols.
<i>Travel</i>	
Fortescue, Lady. Mountain Madness ..	3
Sackville-West, V. Passenger to Teheran ..	2
Smedley, Agnes. Battle Hymn of China ..	9
<i>Biography</i>	
Rowse, A. L. Cornish Childhood ..	6
<i>Grade 1</i>	
Scarlett, Susan. Summer Pudding ..	4
Scarlett, Susan. Ten Way Street ..	4
<i>Moan</i>	
Glad Tidings ..	1
Hymns, Evening ..	1
Hymns, Morning ..	1
O'Brien, B. Comforted of God ..	1
Author of "By an Unknown Disciple." Paul the Christian ..	6
Prayer Book: Order of Confirmation (small size)	1
* Machine transcribed Braille.	

MEMORIAL TO THE LATE Mr. W. M. STONE.

The Craigmillar Club, comprising the former pupils and staff of the Royal Blind School, Edinburgh, are issuing an appeal for funds to provide a memorial to Mr. W. M. Stone, who was headmaster of their school from 1905 to 1932, and who died in July, 1943. By his manifold services and activities, public and private, on behalf of the blind community, Mr. Stone was well known, not only in this country, but farther afield as well, and many tributes were paid to his work at the time of his passing. Many readers who knew him will be interested in this scheme, and may wish to contribute to it. Subscriptions should be forwarded, before the end of June, to the Treasurer of the Craigmillar Club, who is Miss Boyle, Royal Blind School, Edinburgh, 9, and the Committee of the Club will welcome and consider from contributors any suggestions with regard to the purpose for which the funds should be used. The form of the memorial has not yet been finally decided, but the suggestion most favoured thus far is that the money collected should be used for the provision or publication of books or music for the use of the blind.

A. M. CAMPBELL, M.A., Secretary.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

Mr. and Mrs. Penwarne, of 3, St. Thomas's Road, Newquay, will have **vacancies for blind or sighted holiday guests** during the spring and summer months. Accommodation provided for married couples. Blind people must be accompanied by sighted guide. House three minutes' walk from station. Terms on application.

SCHOOL OF TELEPHONY, CARDIFF.

There are a few vacancies for pupils for a course of training in Telephony. Subjects include: Braille, Shorthand, Typewriting and Switch Board Operating. Course approved by Ministry of Education. Applications to the Secretary, Cardiff Institute for the Blind, Longcross Street, Cardiff.

HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1945.

Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All home teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.

To **HOME TEACHERS** and others: The Royal Normal College for the Blind will have a vacancy in May for an Assistant Teacher of Typewriting. Experience not essential—suitable applicant will be taught methods. Salary in accordance with Burnham Scale, with free board and lodgings for supervisory duties. Reply, stating age, qualifications and experience to: Principal, Rowton Castle, near Shrewsbury.

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Applications are invited for the position of **Sighted Female Home Teacher** at a commencing salary (if certificated) of £180 per annum, plus bonus, rising by annual increments of £10 to £210 per annum, plus bonus. The position is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Applications, with copies of testimonials, stating age, experience and qualifications, should reach the undersigned not later than April 30th, 1945.

A. C. V. THOMAS,

Superintendent and Secretary.

Royal Midland Institution for the Blind,
Chaucer Street, Nottingham.

WESTMORLAND COUNTY COUNCIL.

Applications are invited for the post of **Home Teacher for the Blind**.

A certificate of training is not essential, but preference may be given to candidates possessing one.

The salary will be £180 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £250 per annum, plus war bonus at the current rate (i.e., at present £48 2s. od.).

The starting salary will be fixed according to experience and qualifications.

The post will be superannuable.

Forms of application may be obtained from me, and must be returned to me not later than 26th April, 1945.

H. B. GREENWOOD,

Clerk to the Council.

County Hall, Kendal.
29th March, 1945.

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL. APPOINTMENT OF HOME TEACHER FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of **Certificated (sighted) Home Teacher (female)**. Secretarial experience an advantage, but not essential. Salary £180 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £280 per annum, plus war bonus, at present £48 per annum. Previous experience will be considered in fixing commencing salary.

Candidates must be able to drive a car, which will be provided.

The post is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination, and to reside in or near Chichester.

Applications stating age, qualifications and experience, with names and addresses of two references, should be addressed to the County Medical Officer, County Hall, Chichester, not later than 30th April, 1945.

T. C. HAYWARD,

Clerk of the County Council.

April, 1945.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

Vol. XXIX. No 341.

MAY 15TH, 1945.

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION: NEW REGULATIONS

THE Minister of Education has at last issued his eagerly-awaited Regulations in respect of handicapped children, together with an explanatory memorandum (Handicapped Pupils and Medical Services Regulations, 1945, 4d., Ministry of Education Circular 41, 2d., H.M. Stationery Office). Part II of the Regulations defines the several categories of pupils requiring special educational treatment. The two which concern us primarily are:—

- (a) Blind Pupils: that is to say, pupils who have no sight, or whose sight is or is likely to become so defective that they require education by methods not involving the use of sight.
- (b) Partially Sighted Pupils: that is to say, pupils who, by reason of defective vision cannot follow the ordinary curriculum without detriment to their sight or to their educational development, but can be educated by special methods involving the use of sight.

The other handicapped children defined are Deaf Pupils; Partially Deaf Pupils; Delicate Pupils; Diabetic Pupils; Educationally Subnormal Pupils; Epileptic Pupils; Maladjusted Pupils; Physically Handicapped Pupils; Pupils Suffering from Speech Defect.

It is explained in the Circular that some children have multiple defects and fall within more than one of the categories defined in the Regulation. Until special schools are provided for children suffering from multiple defects, these children should be educated under the heading which seems more appropriate. This may not be the same during the child's whole school life.

Regulation 4 makes it compulsory for every blind pupil to be educated in a special school, and this shall be a boarding school, although there will be no objection to the admission of blind pupils whose homes are in the vicinity of a boarding school as day pupils.

With regard to the partially sighted pupils, if the handicap is severe the child shall be educated in a special school for partially sighted pupils, "but where the disability is not serious" (in the words of the Act, Section 33, paragraph 2), the child may attend an ordinary school where he will receive special educational treatment, which is defined as "a favourable position in the class room and the provision of special furniture, apparatus and equipment." In certain cases—presumably where it is not possible to organise special educational treatment for isolated cases—the Minister would approve arrangements for boarding out handicapped children with selected foster parents or in hostels. The Regulations

provide for rigorous and regular inspection of such arrangements.

The definition of the category of educationally subnormal pupils in these Regulations has been drawn to include not only children of the type formerly ascertained as educable mental defectives under Section 55 of the Education Act, 1921, but also dull children and those retarded in their education on account of other conditions than limited ability. The Regulations do not deal with children who, by reason of disability of mind, are incapable of receiving education at school.

Parts III, IV and V deal with the conditions which must be observed by Special Schools and Institutions for the Further Education and Training of Disabled Persons, in order that they may be approved and recognised for the payment of grant. It would appear that the same definitions would apply to pupils in training establishments as to handicapped pupils, and for the purposes of the Regulations the expression "Institution" means a Special School or an Institution for Further Education and Training of Disabled Persons. An interesting innovation in the Regulations, and one that had been pressed for by those interested in the conduct of Special School education, makes compulsory the interchange of medical and educational records as between one establishment and another, in order that the previous history of the pupil shall be available should he move to another Institution.

Regulation 24 is designed to eliminate the uneconomical and ineffective organisation, and the Minister may refuse recognition of any Institution which is not sufficiently large to be properly organised. The standard laid down for blind and partially sighted school is an all-age school of five classes; if organised solely as Primary or Secondary, three classes. The Minister has made a Regulation to limit the size of classes, and has set up a maximum of 15 for a class of blind or partially sighted registered pupils. This is a distinct advance on the old Regulation, which permitted classes of 20 blind pupils in average attendance.

Regulation 28 is concerned with the educational year and holidays, and also with the length of school sessions. The school must meet for not less than 400 sessions in each educational year, and each session shall comprise:—

- (a) At least one-and-a-half hours of secular instruction in a school or class for pupils mainly under the age of eight years, and
- (b) At least two hours of such instruction in a school or class for pupils mainly over that age.

There is, however, a proviso that the Medical Officer shall determine whether these hours would act detrimentally to an individual pupil. The qualifications in regard to teaching staff are not stated, and it is assumed that these will be issued as an administrative memorandum later on.

Regulations 31-35 apply to Special Schools not maintained by Local Education Authorities. They deal with the appointment of Managers; that the School shall not be conducted for profit; that a medical record shall be kept for every pupil; and for the keeping and auditing of accounts. The School premises shall conform to the regulations, and in this connection it would be useful to refer to the Regulations Prescribing Standards for School Premises, 1945, Statutory Rules and Orders No. 345. Regulation 35 is explained in the Circular. Fees charged to Authorities must be inclusive of education, books, stationery and equipment; board and lodging, laundry, medical and dental inspection, supervision and treatment. The fees may include cost of clothing, repairs to clothes, boots and shoes; hair-cuts and other incidental expenses. The fees must receive the prior approval of the Minister, who will have regard to the financial resources of the School.

Part V, which takes the place of Chapter VII of Grant Regulation No. 19, sets out the special conditions to be observed by an institution for the Further Education and Training of Disabled Persons. The responsibility for securing this training rests upon Local Education Authorities under Section 47 of the Act, but it is pointed out that the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, has conferred on the Minister of Labour and National Service general responsibility for the training and employment of disabled persons. Discussion is taking place between the Departments as to the administrative arrangements which should be made to secure that suitable training shall be available for all who require it and as to the precise demarcation of responsibility. The decisions reached will be announced later. In the meantime, Local Education Authorities and the Institutions concerned should continue for the present their existing arrangements.

Part VII of the Regulations makes provision for the payment of grants to Special Schools and Training Institutions not maintained by a Local Education Authority. The former Capitation Grants payable in respect of pupils not sent by Local Education Authorities are discontinued. Grants may take two forms:—

- (a) Accommodation grant, payable only in the case of Special Schools, in respect of

improvement, extension or replacement of the premises of an existing school, or the provision of a new school ;

- (b) Grants towards the maintenance of Special Schools and Training Institutions.

The Regulations, on the whole, will be heartily

welcomed by all who have the interest of blind education at heart, and particularly by those whose responsibility it is to maintain the Schools and Institutions which have dealt so effectively in the past with the education and training of the blind.

HOME NEWS

Question in Parliament on Blind Welfare.—Following upon his meeting with leaders and members of the National League for the Blind in the Furness area recently, Sir Ian Fraser has raised the matter of the welfare of the blind in Parliament, by a question to the Minister for National Insurance, Sir William Jowitt, in which he asked the Minister "If he can give an assurance that under the proposed national insurance scheme blind persons will not be worse off financially than they are at present under the Blind Persons Acts, and that full State-Aid for the blind, whether through national insurance or national assistance, or both, will be administered with the same understanding as the welfare of the blind is now administered by local authorities."

Sir William Jowitt replied : "I can assure my hon. and gallant friend that it is the object of the new arrangements to improve the general system of assistance to blind persons under its various heads. Having regard to the wide variation in the standards adopted by the different Local Authorities under the existing system, it is not possible at present to give undertakings in detail as to the effect which would be produced by the proposed scheme, but it is certainly the intention that in working out their details, blind persons shall be treated with the fullest sympathy and understanding."

In an interview, Sir Ian Fraser said, "This reply is satisfactory so far as it goes, but it is only the first step, and we must take an early opportunity of raising the matter in the House of Commons on an appropriate occasion. If such an occasion does not arise we must see to it on the Committee stage of the National Insurance Bill that blind people are properly provided for."

School of Physiotherapy and Eichholz Clinic.—The Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind, taking account of the continued growth and contemplated further developments of the School of Physiotherapy and of the Eichholz Clinic, has decided to regard them henceforward as two separate units constituting the Physiotherapy Department. Mrs. Chaplin-Hall continues to be Secretary of the School, and Miss M. Bagnall, Sister in the Eichholz Clinic and part-time teacher in the School, has been

appointed Head of the Eichholz Clinic as from 1st April, 1945.

Scottish Trade Unions and the Blind.—At the Scottish Trades Union Congress in conference at Aberdeen last month, Mr. R. Hanlan, a blind delegate of the National League for the Blind, said that there was a danger of the White Paper becoming reactionary and retrogressive so far as the blind were concerned, and he appealed for a continued trade union guard on their welfare.

Blind Welfare in the Colonies.—In co-operation with the Colonial Office, the National Institute is making plans for the future development of Blind Welfare in the Colonies. It has reconstituted its Empire Development Committee under the Chairmanship of Lt.-Colonel Sir Bernard Reilly, K.C.M.G., an administrator with wide knowledge of colonial affairs, who was until recently, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Aden. The Committee will recommend ways and means of preventing blindness, and of developing facilities for the education, training, employment and general welfare of the Colonial Blind.

The problem is vast and calls for many years of imaginative hard work. Machinery will have to be created, suited to the conditions prevailing in each colony. The local administration in some colonies has already done valuable pioneer work, and a number of voluntary societies for the blind, usually of missionary origin, exists, whose co-operation will be an essential part of the plan. In conjunction with the Colonial Office, the Institute will aim at creating in each colony an attitude favourable to the development of local voluntary work for the blind.

Salute to the British Blind.—The following cablegram was received by the National Institute for the Blind on 10th May :—"The readers of *The Jewish Braille Review and Braille Musician* send fraternal Greetings and heartfelt congratulations to the brave blind men and women of the British Isles and to their seeing fellow countrymen on the most frightful ordeal by war in history. May the glorious peace to come fully justify the unimaginable suffering and sacrifices you have heroically borne.—LEOPOLD DUBOV, Editor."

Blind to be Taught Spinning.—In Leverstock Green spinning has been revived, and one of the spinners, Miss Kyrke-Pearson, of "Casa Laeta," aims to teach the art to blind people. She is convinced that spinning on spindles would provide the blind with a great chance of acquiring a useful and attractive accomplishment. Owing to the shortage of sheep's wool, the spinners at Leverstock Green have been using dog's hair, which has proved immensely successful. Dyes from wild flowers are also used.

New Warwickshire Hostel for Blind Working Girls.—Last month Lady Helen Seymour, President of the Warwickshire Red Cross, officially opened Tower House Hostel at Hillmorton, for Blind Working Girls. Mr. W. S. Howard, Chairman of the Warwickshire Association for the Blind, explained that the idea of the Hostel originated with Miss S. M. Gaster, Organising Secretary of the Association, and the house was bought by and maintained by the County Council, and run by the Association, who paid the current expenses. A sum of £778 had been raised for it by voluntary effort.

The Hostel has accommodation for ten residents.

The seven girls at present resident there have their own bed-sitting rooms, are self-supporting, and cook their own meals which they have in their own rooms with the exception of mid-day dinner which is a communal meal. The work done includes machine and hand-knitting, handicrafts, domestic work and poultry-keeping.

Sports Club for the Blind.—The dance season has now finished and the Rowing and Rambling Sections have been started in earnest. Any reader who lives in the London area and wishes to join in the Rambles should communicate with the leader, Miss Neighbour, 47, Wray Crescent, Finsbury Park, N.4.

Rowing in Regents' Park Lake is a great attraction. It takes place on Saturday mornings and on one evening each week. The coach, Miss Howard, 14, Hillcourt Avenue, Edgware, will be delighted to welcome prospective members and to give full details on request.

Communications on general matters affecting the Club should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. W. Kitchen, 8, Strathmore Gardens, Finchley, N.3.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION CHANGES

THE Ministry of Education has announced changes in the organisation of the Ministry consequent on the Education Act, which came into force on April 1st. There are to be four new administrative Branches:—

1. *The Schools Branch*, responsible for primary and secondary education, excluding education in Special Schools; it has a separate division to deal with Nursery Schools and classes.
2. *Further Education Branch*, responsible for all forms of further education, including the youth service.
3. *Teachers Branch*, responsible for the training and supply of teachers generally.
4. *Information and External Relations Branch*.

The Memorandum, No. 43, which gives these particulars, adds that the *Medical Branch* will continue to deal with the School Medical Service, Special Schools, and the provision of milk and meals. The Branch will be under the direction of a Principal Assistant Secretary, Mr. N. D. Bosworth-Smith.

As the term Special Schools overrides the term Nursery Schools, the Medical Branch of the Ministry will be concerned with the National Institute's Sunshine Homes. The reconstituted inspectorate will have wider responsibilities in relation to special educational treatment, and

the Medical Branch has strengthened its inspectorate by the appointment of Miss Lindsay as Assistant to Mr. Lumsden; Miss Lindsay is already well-known for her good work as an Inspector of Special Schools in Liverpool.

The territorial organisation will be developed so that there will ultimately be ten Divisions arranged in three Regional Groups. Details of the interim organisation are given, but it appears that the Divisions will not be concerned with Special Schools.

The other Branches and Divisions in the Ministry are the *Legal Branch*, *Finance Branch*, *Awards Branch*, *Buildings and Priority Branch*, *Pensions Branch* and *Teachers' Salaries Division*.

A further announcement was that the Inspectorate had been reorganised in ten (instead of nine) Divisions with boundaries roughly corresponding to the Civil Defence Regions.

There are now a Senior Chief Inspector (Mr. M. P. Roseveare), six chief Inspectors for England and one for Wales. The Inspectorate covers the full range of primary, secondary and further education, the training of teachers and educational establishments generally, and the Inspectors will continue to act in a liason capacity between the Ministry and Local Education Authorities and other bodies concerned with educational administration.

FIVE WAYS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR THE BLIND

THE views of Blind Welfare officials are, for the most part, discernible only behind the formal anonymity of official documents. Their duty is to advise on, not to make, policy. In these swiftly moving days, however, when Committees have to make crucially important decisions, and when even the expert has difficulty in weaving his way through a labyrinth of Enactments and White Papers, it is well that officials should confer and, if they can agree, should publish their recommendations for the guidance of their Committees and of Blind Welfare as a whole.

For this reason, a memorandum entitled "Five Ways to Employment for the Blind," which has just been published by the National Institute for the Blind, is significant and should be read widely. It is the Report of a small conference of officials which met last October at Broadway, under the chairmanship of Mr. Ben Purse, to consider the future organisation of employment for the blind in the light of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, and of recent legislative proposals. The officials concerned—Managers of Workshops for the Blind and members of the staff of the N.I.B.—considered the problem with ruthless realism, and agreed on a number of positive conclusions, which are vigorously set out in their 8,000 word memorandum.

The document itself is a précis of three days close discussion, and only a brief outline of its conclusions can be given here. Such treatment might lead to misinterpretation, as many of the facts and much of the closely-knit argument which support each conclusion have necessarily to be omitted, and readers who are interested are strongly advised to get a copy of the complete document.

The conference started from the point that, since the Blind Persons Act of 1920, the blind have been a privileged people, enjoying special advantages derived from a separate system of welfare which, despite certain defects, was superior to the arrangements made for any other disabled persons. The arrangements now contemplated for the employment of the disabled propose to be both more inclusive and more economic, and Blind Welfare has to beware of clinging to the past at the expense of missing present opportunities. The total number of blind persons of working age, however, is only a small fraction of the total employed working population; and, indeed, of the total number of

disabled people who come within the scope of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act. For this reason we could not resist the main stream of development even if we wished to.

Employment policy for the blind must be judged by the variety, as well as the quantity and quality, of occupation. Both sheltered employment and placement in open industry must be developed to the maximum extent, and the individual blind worker must be given the greatest possible freedom of choice. In practice most blind people will choose that form of occupation which promises the highest wage and the greatest likelihood of continuous employment. On the other hand, a number, even of those who might earn a higher wage in open industry, particularly if they have been trained for a workshop craft, will find more satisfaction in producing complete commodities in a workshop than in producing identical articles or components by the repetition process of a modern factory. The Report realistically adds, however, that if sheltered employment for the disabled can be placed on a sound economic footing, as the Act anticipates, Blind Welfare will have to adduce very good reasons for continuing to employ the blind in special workshops run at a substantial loss.

Considering lines of future development, the conference saw five distinct ways of employment now open, or opening, for the blind. They are:—

- (a) Handcraft Workshops, i.e., workshops for skilled craftsmen.
- (b) Industrial Workshops.
- (c) Disabled Persons Employment Undertakings, i.e., sheltered workshops, etc., under the national system of employment for the disabled.
- (d) Open Industry.
- (e) Employment on Own Account.

The general distinction between sheltered employment undertakings—"ways" (a) to (c) and open industry (d) and (e)—is that the production of the former is governed by the primary intention of employing people of a certain type, whereas open industry has the primary intention of producing commodities, drawing its labour from the general labour market.

Handcraft Workshops.

These will be the existing type of workshop raised to the higher level required by the new conditions. They will employ men and women who have proved themselves competent in their particular crafts and, as time goes on, young or newly blinded people who have the necessary

aptitude for craftsmanship and prefer workshop employment. They will, in the first instance, concentrate on the trades which have proved to be reasonably economic when employing competent craftsmen. Such workshops should never incur large trading losses and might even pay their way if they have preference in public orders.

Industrial Workshops.

These will offer a wide range of repetition work to blind people who have no marked craftsmanship skill, but are not suited to open industry. They might undertake sub-contracts for industrial concerns or in conjunction with other sheltered employment undertakings. The initial cost of buildings and plant will be considerable but such undertakings, once established, should provide employment for a large number of blind persons, and that cost should be met as a sound investment for the welfare of the blind.

Disabled Persons Employment Undertakings.

Employment in workshops established for disabled persons in general would be of particular value to blind persons whose needs cannot be met by a local workshop for the blind or home workers' scheme. It would give opportunity also to blind people who have specialist skill which cannot be made use of in a workshop for the blind, and to any who suffers from an added disability such as crippling, which might be catered for in a workshop providing special facilities for overcoming that disability.

Employment in Open Industry.

Under this heading the Report deals with employment under the quota and in "designated" occupations. It recognises that placement must be done by a specialist, preferably a blind or partially sighted man. One such "blind persons employment officer" should be allocated to each of the Ministry of Labour regions, of which there are ten in England and Wales. The question at once arises who should appoint, pay and direct this new service. The Ministry of Labour itself cannot at present do so, and there are no units of Blind Welfare corresponding exactly with the Ministerial region. In some regions, however, there is virtual correspondence with the area served by a powerful general agency for the blind, or by a group of such agencies, one of whose functions is already industrial. The conclusion is "that wherever possible a local industrial agency for the blind, or a group of such agencies, should undertake to appoint a Regional Blind Persons Employment Officer; where the organisation of Blind Welfare does not permit such an appointment, it should be made by the N.I.B. The Blind Persons Employment Officers, by whomsoever appointed, should work together

as a team and maintain continuous contact with the National Institute Placement Department which, in its turn, will maintain continuous contact with the Ministry of Labour."

Employment on Own Account.

Provision for this type of employment is greatly to be desired, in some cases because the nature of the disability makes a contractual occupation impossible, and in others because disabled people may have a definite preference for independence. The Act makes no specific provision for such employment, but the general powers conferred on the Minister enable him to give substantial assistance in a variety of ways as yet unspecified. In the Conference's view the essential conditions for success in this direction are facilities for training and, in some cases, financial assistance. As social services go, Blind Welfare is well off, and finance need never be an obstacle. All placements of this kind, however, must result from finding the job for the individual, not from shaping the individual to the job.

Administration of Sheltered Employment Undertakings.

Under the Act sheltered employment undertakings might be administered as Departments of local authorities, as voluntary agents of one or more local authorities, or as voluntary bodies recognised by the Ministry of Labour. The Report urges that the choice between these possibilities should be made on economic, not political grounds. It must be governed also by the essential need for bringing Workshops for the Blind into the main stream of development under the new Act. After carefully studying the arguments for and against control by local authorities, the Conference reached the conclusion "that the interests of the blind would be best secured by making Workshops for the Blind an integral part of the industrial system for the disabled set up by the Ministry of Labour, so that they will receive recognition and direct assistance from it."

Vocational Training.

The Report recommends that training for sheltered employment should be given by the Training Departments of Workshops for the Blind. They will have to adapt themselves to the new conditions and the need for producing trainees who have not only acquired some skill, but are also capable of doing a full day's work.

Training for Open Industry, on the other hand, should aim at accustoming the blind trainee to the tempo and general requirements of factory life. It should include instruction in the use of adapted precision instruments and in the general principles of hand assembly and machine operation. Such training, in the view of the Conference, can best be given in the Ministry of Labour centres

and in so far as the blind should be accustomed to working in teams with sighted employees training should, where possible, be given in a centre not exclusively limited to the blind.

In this connection the Report makes the interesting suggestion that blind adolescents, before starting industrial training, would immensely benefit by an extra year's continued education which should have no more vocational bias than the County Colleges to be established under the new Education Act. This suggestion will have to be worked out carefully, but it will probably appeal to the majority of blind educationists as a logical and desirable step.

Augmentation.

The final paragraphs of the Report are devoted to the vexed question of augmentation of earnings. That problem has to be considered in the light of the White Paper on National Insurance,

and the proposals made by the Conference exactly follow the policy which has now been agreed by the co-ordinated system of Blind Welfare, and which was described in the April issue of the NEW BEACON. The recommendation is "that the Blind and other handicapped persons who suffer both from extra costs of living and decreased earning power should receive disability increments to be paid at a flat rate from the National Insurance Fund, in addition to National Insurance benefits or earnings."

The matters dealt with in this Report are the subject of legitimate controversy, and it is hardly to be expected that everyone will agree with all the Conference's recommendations. Some may consider them Utopian, and yet others may feel that they are not radical enough. The Report, however, deserves the close study of all who are concerned with the future employment of the blind.

TRIBUTE TO A BLIND TYPIST

The following tribute is paid to a blind typist in the current issue of the "Twinlock News," issued by Percy Jones (Twinlock) Ltd., Beckenham.

FOR the past two years a great many of our letters have been written by a blind typist using a dictaphone, and we think our experience may be interesting to you. Some of you may have to face the problem of members of your staff who have been so unfortunate as to lose their sight in the war.

When we engaged our blind typist we were sceptical. We believed in trying anything that holds a slender hope of success, and this work seemed to present no insuperable obstacle to a blind person, but we did not think it would work out well in practice, and we are glad to have been so very wrong. Many of you will have received letters from us with /EWF as part of the reference, and so far as we know you have not noticed anything unusual about them. The EWF are the initials of our Mr. Fry who types them very well indeed and who overcomes the difficulties of knowing which is the top of the heading and the right side of the carbon in ways of his own that seem to us uncanny. His only special equipment is a Braille scale along the top of his typewriter. He shaves his own records and his dictaphone has nothing special about it whatsoever. Not being over fond of statistics, we cannot tell you how much he does in a day, but it all seems very satisfactory; and we are never likely to forget how he stayed with us all through the Flying Bomb time when so many weaker

vessels left us. When the roof spotter told us to take cover, we stowed him in safety under the stairs and took him out again after the danger had passed, and he stood it with the best.

There are snags, naturally, in employing blind people as typists. The biggest, and in fact the only one that concerns the correspondent, is the necessity for giving all details of names, addresses and references. You can rely on the goodwill of your employees to overcome any other little difficulties. Somebody will put him on his train or bus, another will take him to the canteen three minutes before the rush commences and for a walk in the sunshine afterwards, not because he is blind but because he is one of themselves doing a good day's work and making so little of his handicap.

In addition to his dictaphone skill Mr. Fry is a wizard on his shorthand machine. He taps it out at immense speed in Braille on a paper ribbon, and then reads it back with his fingers and re-types later. So our advice (if you need it) is to engage a blind shorthand typist if one comes your way, and may you be as satisfied with him as we are with our Mr. Eric W. Fry, B.Sc.

(Mr. Fry comes in to take my own personal letters and he always keeps up with me even if I get excited and talk quickly. I never want a better stenographer.—ED.)

A BLIND, DEAF AND DUMB KNITTER.

By L. K. MUMBY.

Home Teacher and Visitor for Lindsey County Council and Lindsey Blind Society.

MISS GRACE BENNETT, blind, deaf and dumb, has just learned to use the circular knitting machine at the age of 45 years.

Grace has lived all her life in a lonely village. Up to the age of 7 years she attended the village school. Then her sight failed but after an operation some small degree of sight was restored only to be followed by further disaster. Overnight Grace completely lost her hearing and so at the age of 7 her education ceased and she was greatly handicapped. Various attempts were made to place her in a special school but Blind Welfare was then by no means so advanced as it is to-day and the efforts were unsuccessful.

Fortunately, Grace had understanding parents who allowed her freedom and encouraged her to be as independent as possible in her daily life. She became adept in domestic duties and gardening. Her Home Teachers taught her many handicrafts and in these she quickly showed her ability and creativeness.

She only has a very rapid form of speech which is most difficult to understand and her vocabulary is, naturally, very limited. I had tried to teach her the deaf-blind manual but without much success as she has so few adjectives and so little knowledge of spelling.

I became Grace's Home Teacher four years ago and soon realised her ability and intelligence, but the tragedy of her wasted gifts loomed very large. Wartime restrictions on handicraft materials, in spite of every effort made and her own creativeness, soon made it very difficult to find her pastime occupation.

About five miles away lived Mrs. N. Parrish, a Home Worker engaged in machine knitting. It occurred to me that Mrs. Parrish might teach Grace to use a knitting machine, and this idea was confided to the Local Authority. With its usual readiness, it at once encouraged the idea. Mrs. Parrish's co-operation was quickly forth-

coming and the necessary materials provided by the local Society through its Industries Organiser.

So we made our first visit; teacher and pupil were introduced and quickly became friends. By means of gesticulations, hand guidance and interpretation from her parents, Grace became acquainted with the intricacies of the circular knitting machine. She quickly showed that she would make good progress, and lessons for two days per week were arranged.

The knitting progressed but then came the difficulty of counting. Grace could only count up to ten, and once more help was sought. A friendly A.R.P. Warden made a bead frame to my design and measurement. This is a frame similar to those used in infant schools and placed on a firm, heavy base and the right height for the knitter to use as she sits at her machine. There are three wires with ten beads on each and Grace quickly made her own system. The top line is for the welt, the second for the leg and the third line for the foot, and as each ten rounds are completed one bead is passed along until the right number of rounds for each pattern have been completed.

Now after three months tuition—two days per week—Grace is knitting, unaided, men's half hose. These are ribbed, perfectly knitted and pressed, and are very saleable. The Industries Organiser is delighted with their quality.

The great achievement could never have been accomplished on conventional lines of training.

Mrs. Parrish, the teacher, deserves very great credit for her patience and understanding as, step by step, she so cleverly showed Grace each operation. Those who understand the machine will realise how many steps there were.

We now look forward to another period of tuition when Grace will be shown more advanced knitting.

The Local Authority and Voluntary Society are giving every assistance in this unconventional but highly successful venture.

"FOR THE BLIND"

O FATHER! Who createst all,
Who madest man with eyes to see;
Grant unto those who lose their sight
Full measure of Thine inward light.

O Christ! Who came on earth to dwell,
To save, and heal our human woes,
Help Thou the blind when footsteps stray
To know the Life, the Truth, the Way.

O Holy Ghost! Great Comforter
Of all the wounded and the weak,
Give joy and peace to those in need;
Through pleasant pastures gently lead.

O Trinity! Most mystic One!
When this brief life on earth is run,
Grant in that realm that knows no night
They find Thy boundless Love and Light.

DAVID CLARK, Capt.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A PARTIALLY SIGHTED JOURNALIST—I

By HENRY PAYNE

I HAVE always felt, and shall always continue to feel, a certain definite sense of pleasure that I was born in the Victorian age. This period of comparative quiet and, to a large measure humdrum existence, represents the happiest period of a life that has been fraught with many vicissitudes and ups and downs.

My early childhood and boyhood were extremely hard, as I was left an orphan at a very early age, and for many years was a great sufferer from a number of ailments, not altogether of the nature usually associated with childhood. My parents were just ordinary people, my Father being a coachman, and my Mother, prior to her marriage, a domestic servant. I lost both of these parents before I was eight, and at that age was admitted to an orphanage founded by the late Lord Shaftesbury. After a very brief sojourn at this institution a severe illness necessitated my removal to an infirmary attached to a Poor Law institution in the West Central district of London. Here I had to remain for a period of two years, during the whole of which time I was confined to bed. My complaints were two in number and the parts affected were my knees and my eyes; and I would like to say in passing, that the treatment applied in both cases was far more painful than the ailments themselves. I have touched upon this illness, simply to prove that an ailing child may, and frequently does, develop into a strong and robust man and this has been particularly true in my case; for, after being told by many medical specialists that I would never make old bones, I have up to the present managed to live up to the age of sixty-six; and barring accidents feel like going on for another ten years or so.

When I left this workhouse infirmary I was discharged as cured, but so far as my eyes were concerned, this was not the case, for I have suffered from them all my life and thirty years ago I became practically blind. The sight having gone from one eye completely with the other I was able to read and write a letter, but only with the greatest of difficulty. From the infirmary I was sent to a Poor Law School; where for four years I underwent the so-called "system of education," being grounded in the customary three "R's," mixed with a little divinity once a week. This four years of schooling represents the

whole of my education as we understand the term.

My period of school life came to a sudden end, when one day the School was visited by some members of the governing body, who selected me, in company with three other boys to repair to the London Workhouse; there to be instructed in the art of making, and baking bread, as understood by the authorities there. This particular occupation, on account of the heat of the ovens and glare of the furnaces, combined with the dust from the flour, caused my sight to get worse. I was then thirteen years of age, and for the next three years I remained in that Institution and worked as hard as any man of thirty for my board and lodging, clothing, and 6d. a week. I do not want to be understood as suggesting that my life in the institution was unhappy, or that I was in anyway put upon, or tyrannised over. On the contrary, we boys were very well treated indeed, although, it is true, we had to work exceptionally hard for youngsters of our age.

It was at about this time that I first began to evince that overpowering desire to write, which afterwards became an obsession with me, and stayed with me until, at about the age of thirty, blindness damped my ardour and thwarted my ambition. The workhouse in which I was an inmate, boasted of a very considerable library and within a year I had read most of the books it contained. All this reading helped me much in after life, when I began to take up writing seriously. One thing that always amazed me in this connection, that was my extreme accuracy in spelling, since I could not have acquired it in four years schooling at a Poor-Law Institution. Where did it come from? Certainly not from my Father, who knew more about horses than words, and certainly not from my Mother, whose chief accomplishment as I have learned from those who knew her, lay in the culinary art. When not reading, my limited leisure was devoted to writing. In the view of present paper shortage, I shudder to think how many valuable quires of foolscap I wasted in those three years. It must have run into hundreds. In this, I was encouraged by the Master of the Workhouse, who allowed me as much paper as I wanted.

At the end of those three years I was considered sufficiently well versed in my trade to be sent into

the outside world, to take up a situation, and accordingly one was found for me at a baker's shop in the neighbourhood of King's Cross, at the salary of 2/6. a week and board and lodgings. For this, I had to work on an average sixteen hours a day, for six days a week, and seven on every Sunday, under conditions that beggar description. This job was suddenly terminated by an accident which led me to the Royal Free Hospital, with a badly fractured thigh, where I remained for fourteen weeks and afterwards went to a convalescent home for another month.

On my return to London at the end of this convalescent period, I found much to my dismay that my situation had been filled while I was yet in hospital, which all things considered, was justified. Having no relations or friends to whom I could go in my extremity, I was, nevertheless, fortunate enough to secure a lodging with a customer of my old employer. And then began the dreary and monotonous search for another job. At every place where I applied for a position, I found that, on admitting my workhouse upbringing and training, I was immediately turned down.

Soon the time came when, unable any longer to continue the payment of my rent, I was compelled to quit my lodging. I would rather draw a veil over the period of many months of destitution and wanton misery, which succeeded this event—the drab and colourless existence of the submerged tenth, tramping the seemingly interminable streets of London; by day earning a few coppers as chance permitted, and sleeping by night in any place which afforded some shelter from the elements. I could fill a volume with my experiences in this connection, but no useful purpose could be served at the present juncture.

One night while standing in a queue outside the Salvation Army shelter at Blackfriars, awaiting admission for the night, a young man approached me and asked me if I wanted a job and, upon receiving a reply in the affirmative, led me to a tumble-down shed in Vauxhall where he informed me he had a small business in the making and selling of toy cars. He offered to supply me with food and shelter if I would assist him in the business, the mention of wages being entirely ignored. However, it was a case of "any port in a storm," and as I was up against it good and hard, I was only too glad to avail myself of his offer. I started work at 6 a.m. and finished at about 8 p.m., with one break for half an hour at noon. My food consisted mainly of that traditional London dish "fish and chips," and my bed at night was a heap of shavings under the work bench.

One day a bluff and genial costermonger came

into the workshop and in the course of conversation, asked me if I would like to go hopping with him and his "old woman." Eager for any new experience, I readily agreed and it was arranged that I should meet him on the following morning at London Bridge Station, there to entrain for the hop fields of Kent. Thus did destiny star me into my future mode of existence, for after one glorious month in the "Garden of England," I became passionately enamoured of the country. So when the genial and kindly costermongers, with all their pots and pans and other appurtenances, returned to London, there to resume their normal existence of selling vegetables, fruit and flowers, I with 7/- in my possession, set out for the South coast. Week followed week and month succeeded month, and still I was travelling the lovely countryside, and drinking in God's free fresh air. Naturally my 7/- did not last me very long, and I was soon reduced to getting food and shelter as best as I could. Now and again I got a day's work on a farm, occasionally I resorted to casual wards, where in spite of my extreme youth and inexperience, I had to perform such manual tasks as stonebreaking, oakum picking, wood-sawing and digging for my food and shelter. This hard labour, however, had one good effect, it hardened my muscles, built up my constitution, and made me self-reliant. They were happy, carefree days, full of novelty and new experiences and I had no thought beyond the provision of the day which always seemed to come whether I tried hard or not.

When I left London my pockets bulged with literature, made up, for the most part, of Stead's Penny Poets and Classics, which were much in vogue in those days and owed their introduction to the reading public to the late W. T. Stead, the famous editor of the "Review of Reviews." Then I began to write, at first haltingly and hesitatingly, but later with more vigour, and soon my pockets began to bulge with my own productions, contained in penny exercise books and written with a stump of lead pencil. I never had any exalted ideas about the merit, or otherwise, of those spasmodic and random compositions. I just wrote for the same reason that the birds sing, because it came natural to me and I just had to do it. During the whole after period I continued to write at every opportunity notwithstanding the fact that, far from improving, my sight was getting steadily worse. Reading and writing became of ever greater difficulty and the eye strain left me with bad headaches. I was advised to abandon both pursuits but the urge to write was so strong that I simply ignored the advice and went on writing.

(To be continued)

VICTORY

EVERY village throughout the country and every street in every town has celebrated Victory over Germany with thanksgivings and rejoicings, and each of those tens of thousands of units has thanked God and rejoiced on behalf of its own people, its own sons and daughters in the Services and the factories, its own elders left to carry on at home and uphold the nation's faiths. We in our turn now thank God and rejoice in Victory over Germany on behalf of our own people, the Blind.

In September, 1939, we wrote: "With their brains and with their hands the blind are able and anxious to render service to the nation, and they await the call." That service was called for and has been rendered, faithfully and unstintingly: in the factories into which the hitherto unemployed blind have poured in ever increasing numbers, in the workshops where the skilled blind craftsmen have been labouring at full pressure throughout the war in fulfilling urgent Government contracts, in the houses of the Home Workers engaged in making essential articles, in all places where the blind at work or at home have striven in every possible way—by carrying on as teachers, musicians, masseurs, clergy, lawyers, shopkeepers, by contributing generously to War Funds and War Savings, by knitting garments for the Services, by A.R.P. work, and, above all, by example of their own innate patience and courage in the face of all trials—to help forward the national effort and to overcome the foul Nazi and Fascist tyrannies.

The trials which the blind have faced have been the trials of all civilians who have manned the fortress of our freedoms. Despite their immense handicap in incidents calling for instantaneous physical action, the blind have borne unflinchingly the terrors and dangers of bombing; they have gone on with their work in cities riddled by bombardment; they have displayed patience and good humour in all the discomforts of evacuation; in their moments of leisure they have calmly continued their cultural avocations. In brief, they have been true to their breed.

Yet not without casualties. The number of blind people killed or injured has not, we are thankful to say, been many, but their own houses, their Centres, Homes and Workshops have suffered considerable damage. We need only recall the bombing of the Headquarters of the Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, the London Association for the Blind and St. Dunstan's, the Yorkshire School for the Blind, the Institutions for the Blind at Swansea, Cardiff, Norwich and Birmingham, the National Institute's Blind Babies Home at Southport, its Holiday Home at St. Leonards and its Branch Offices at Liverpool and Exeter, to remember that the material loss sustained by the blind and Blind Welfare has not been light.

But there is a bright side to that sad picture. However grievous the destruction, it has had no effect on the constructive energy of the blind and those working for their welfare. Strange as it may seem, the war period has been one of intense progressive effort on the part of blind workers and Blind Welfare. There have never been so many blind people earning their own livelihoods as at present; the National and Regional Bodies, the vital Local Agencies, notwithstanding immense difficulties in securing adequate supplies and labour, have not paused in maintaining and, in several cases, extending their services to the blind; in the fields of education and employment a new day has dawned for the blind through the smoke and flames of battle.

Apart from the preservation of our beloved country, the British blind and those who work for them have therefore much to be deeply thankful for, and all will agree that the best way by which we can prove the sincerity of our thankfulness is to respond wholeheartedly to the call of our King and the Prime Minister, to gird up our loins in strength and concord in order to tackle the huge tasks which still remain to be done, before the peoples of the world can pass beneath the arch of Peace, into the light beyond.

THE EDITOR.

BLIND WELFARE AND PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

THE plan concerted by the National Institute for the Blind and the Joint Blind Welfare Committee for the establishment of a National Ophthalmological Research Council, which would co-ordinate and stimulate research into the causation of blindness and its prevention, is for the time being suspended. In the course of the last few months it became necessary to consider the plan in the light of announcements made on the scope of forthcoming legislation for creating a National Health Service. The Government had declared that the extended and co-ordinated Health Service would include provision for research in all branches of medicine. Inquiry elicited that the Government intended to repeal Section 176 of the Public Health Act, 1936, on which the power of Local Authorities to contribute towards Ophthalmological Research depends and, as the Local Government Associations had contemplated advising Local Authorities generally to contribute a total of £20,000 for Prevention of Blindness under that particular clause, it was clearly inadvisable to launch a scheme which, within a year or two at most, would be deprived of essential financial support. The County Councils Association and the A. M. C. have, therefore, decided to mark time in this matter, and the National Institute for the Blind has reluctantly agreed that no other course is possible in the present circumstances.

The resolutions agreed by the C. C. A. and A. M. C. are as follows:—

(a) That, having regard to the new considerations which have arisen since their scheme for the formation of a National Ophthalmic Research Council was propounded, the Joint Committee are of the opinion that steps should not be taken at present to ascertain whether the County and County Borough Councils are willing to contribute their respective shares of the expenditure estimated to be involved by the scheme;

(b) That, if it appears from the details of the proposed National Health Service legislation that the scheme can usefully receive further attention with a view to its full implementation, the subject should then be reconsidered without delay;

(c) That if, as is foreshadowed, all forms of medical research are intended henceforth to be-

come the administrative and financial responsibility of the Government, the Joint Committee consider it necessary, in view of the fact that little or no Exchequer aid appears hitherto to have been allocated for the purposes of research into the causation and prevention of blindness, that they should ask for an assurance that the Government research scheme will make in this particular respect at least as full provision as would have been forthcoming under the Joint Committee's scheme.

The National Institute for the Blind, finding itself compelled by the common-sense of the situation to approve these resolutions, has decided to call the attention of all Agencies for the Blind to the importance of ensuring that adequate provision is made in the National Health Service legislation for the development of Ophthalmological Research, and to the continued need for pursuing all other lines of action calculated to reduce the incidence of blindness. Certain suggestions will be made to Local Authorities and Voluntary Agencies when the matter has gone before the Institute's Council. In the meantime it is hoped that those who are concerned with the welfare of the Blind in all parts of the country will do their utmost to interest their M.P.s in this aspect of the National Health Service.

The argument for the purposeful development of Ophthalmological Research is overwhelmingly strong. The nation is spending over 4½ million pounds a year on Blind Welfare; it is spending practically nothing on the saving of sight. Causation of blindness is as yet imperfectly understood. Only patient and skilful research can give that fuller knowledge which is needed if the progressive increase in the number of the Blind is to be arrested and eventually reduced. To say that "prevention is better than cure" is a truism. Unfortunately it is one of the truisms which in the development of our social services generally is taken for granted rather than made the basis of constructive activity. We must do all in our power to ensure that the National Health Service is equipped with adequate facilities for research into all conditions which affect the eyesight, and for the teaching of Ophthalmology.

Important developments in the organisation of Ophthalmology as a branch of medicine are already afoot, and it may be possible to give fuller details in a forthcoming issue of THE NEW BEACON. Meanwhile "The Report of the Inter-

departmental Committee on Medical Schools," appointed in March, 1942, under the chairmanship of Sir William Goodenough, is a remarkable study of a system of medical education which in its own words shows "urgent need for wide and radical improvements." Its Part II., which covers "Post-Graduate Medical Education and Research," should be read by anyone who ventures to make proposals for the furtherance of Ophthalmological Research. It is a field of policy sown with mines only too ready to explode beneath the layman's feet. The task to which parliamentarians should be urged is that of giving ophthalmological experts proper opportunity.

It is, of course, a disappointment to the National Institute for the Blind, and to the Regional and other bodies represented on its Council which pressed for rapid developments on the side of prevention, that the scheme which was embodied in the National Ophthalmic Research Council plan, should be baulked of fulfilment in its last stage.

A good deal, however, has already been accomplished. The University of Oxford's Department of Ophthalmology has been established, over £100,000 having been collected for the purpose as the result of a private appeal which the National Institute for the Blind financed. Support has also been given to the Research Chair in Ophthalmology founded at the Royal Eye Hospital in London by arrangement between that hospital and the Royal College of Surgeons. Further important developments are taking place in the Empire. The Colonial Office, concerned with the development of social services generally, and with the rehabilitation of war casualties, has approached both the National Institute for the Blind and St. Dunstan's. The National Institute for the Blind has reconstituted its Empire Development Committee under the chairmanship of a distinguished Colonial administrator, Sir Bernard Reilly, in order to give the Colonial Office experienced and effective help. Replies to inquiries have been received from the Colonies showing both the nature and the magnitude of the problem, and it is hoped that the fragmentary services for Blind Welfare, which exist here and there only in the Colonial Empire, will before long be developed on the side of Prevention, Education and Welfare generally.

It goes without saying that such development must be on lines dictated by local customs and conditions, not by any means necessarily on the pattern of Blind Welfare as it has developed at home. Fundamentally, however, the problem remains the same, namely, to ensure first

that blindness does not result from preventable causes, and secondly, that every blind person shall not be handicapped educationally, economically or socially.

Apart from Ophthalmological Research, which should lead not only to a reduction in the number of blind persons, but also to more effective correction of eye defects and preservation of perfect sight, there is much to be done in ensuring early treatment, good illumination of rooms and buildings, skilful supervision of the sight of young children, the prevention of accidents in industry, and even in connection with such larger fields of scientific knowledge as heredity and nutrition. Even without immediate prosecution of plans for the development of Ophthalmological Research, there is certainly much to do in the field of Prevention of Blindness.

It should be made clear at this stage—as some confusing accounts have been given of its recent activities—that the National Institute for the Blind has not intended, and does not intend, to launch any special appeal for the financing of Ophthalmological Research. The plan agreed with the C.C.A. and the A.M.C. was based on the sound principle that medical research is a function of Universities, acting in conjunction with hospitals. In so far as there has been a grave lack of University Departments of Ophthalmology, the Institute has most gladly helped Oxford; it may well help other Universities if they need to make special appeals for the endowment of ophthalmological departments; it will not attempt itself to raise any such funds. A national appeal, which might disturb arrangements for Unification of Collections for the Blind, would not in any circumstances be undertaken by the N.I.B. for a purpose which is primarily ophthalmological, not one of blind welfare. It is to be hoped that the new National Medical Service will bring the Universities, particularly London, Liverpool and Leeds, which are already interested in Prevention of Blindness, fully into the field of Ophthalmological Research.

Sports Club Victory Dance for the Blind.

A Victory Dance will be held on Saturday, June 16th, commencing 6.45 p.m. at the Queen Mary Hall, Y.W.C.A., Great Russell Street, W.C. Admission 2s. Cafeteria services will be available as usual. The Club will be delighted to welcome old friends who have been separated from it by war conditions, and equally any fresh faces. Details from Mr. J. W. Kitchen (Secretary), 8, Strathmore Gardens, Finchley, N.3

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

A Handicap Pension.

Sir,—Just now, in connection with the Government's Social Insurance proposals, pressure is being exerted in favour of a Handicap Pension for all blind people, regardless of their circumstances and of whether they are or are not at work. The sum often suggested is £1 a week. As I believe in united action, I write this letter—after some hesitation and with regret—only because I am worried about the wisdom of putting forward such a demand.

There has been an increasing insistence, encouraged by war-time experience and often applauded in your columns, that many blind persons are competent, in their particular spheres, to hold their own with their sighted competitors. Outsiders might regard the payment of a Handicap Pension to such individuals as disproving the argument.

"Ah!" I can imagine some readers exclaiming, "Handicap Pensions are paid because the blind have higher living costs." Now, unless we can honestly sustain that assertion, the case for an all-embracing Handicap Pension begins to melt away at the very outset. Yet, will anyone deny that there are great variations of circumstances amongst those who are registered as blind? To start with, there are many thousands whose blindness is a natural concomitant of old age, who can no more establish a claim for a Handicap Pension on that account than they could if they suffered from one of many chronic complaints or were crippled. The force of this argument is recognised by my friends having to enlarge their demand to include all such people. At once then you get the problem of certification. Remember, it is public money that would be spent, and there will come a time when the nation will have to husband it. I should not care to be the doctor who had to draw the line.

The alternative to this sea of difficulties is the terra-firma of Insurance Benefits and National Assistance, always provided that the latter is adapted to the differing needs of the blind, that it is flexible and generous to our people, that it does not tie them down to hard and fast maxima, but allows freedom to our Institutions and Societies to go beyond statutory benefits and allowances and so achieve their full usefulness and more than ever justify their foundation.

Yours, etc.,

CLARENCE G. R. HOOD.

To the Editor.

The Education of Blind Children.

SIR,—In the February number of THE NEW BEACON an article appeared by Mr. Arthur Wilson under the general title "I Will be Can-did." Mr. Wilson was concerned particularly with the education of blind children in special schools, and his criticism of these institutions was directed chiefly against headmasters and teachers.

At the beginning of the article Mr. Wilson gave a vivid description of a rather formidable character who presided over a class of seeing boys. Perhaps all teachers come under Mr. Wilson's condemnation. It seems incredible that such a surly, tobacco-chewing individual could be a member of the teaching profession in 1925. The whole trend of modern education has demanded of the teacher a wide sympathy and unobtrusive guidance in relation to the pupils, and in my experience teachers in schools for the blind take a lively interest in progressive education. Institutions for the blind cannot be held responsible for the failure to correct certain unfortunate mannerisms that some blind children develop before coming to school. The only method of overcoming these peculiarities according to those best qualified to offer advice is the constant vigilance of the teacher, and any success achieved is frequently undone when the child returns home for the summer vacation.

Mr. Wilson quoted Miss Elizabeth Whitehead at considerable length to illustrate that schools for the blind make inadequate provision for their pupils to meet and mix with their seeing fellows. It is curious that Miss Whitehead does not think her own family should share the responsibility if she suffered from immaturity when she left school. In these days when companies of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides have been formed in many institutions for the blind, it would seem that progress is being made.

Mr. Wilson appears to be under the erroneous impression that the majority of blind people are abnormal. "Take all the totally blind persons you know," he says, "who have been educated at special schools (excluding Chorleywood, Worcester, and Norwood), and how many appear a little or very much abnormal." One can only conclude that Mr. Wilson has a very limited number of blind acquaintances. I was trained at Craig-millar, and since coming to Canada I have had the opportunity of meeting blind people from all

parts of the Dominion. Among all the blind people I know in Scotland and in Canada, the vast majority are unquestionably normal.

Yours, etc.,

J. T. HEGGIE.

To the Editor,

Deafness or Blindness?

Sir,—In one of the recent issues of THE NEW BEACON the question was raised as to whether deafness or blindness was the greatest misfortune.

The question was brought home to me very forcibly when I had the good fortune to go for a walk from Chepstow to Tintern, one of the accepted beauty spots of this country.

Then it was that I began to think of my blindness and to realise what a loss sight was, for I was able one time to see the beauty of our countryside and I am a lover of it. On that walk I could visualise the lovely scenery. I could picture the valley of the Wye, the river winding among the wooded slopes, the lovely spring colours. There was the Severn and there the Wye, moving slowly but ever nearer to each other, and amidst it all the ruins of Tintern

Abbey, conjuring up in the imagination the monks tending to their herds and their gardens. Across the valley, running through the trees, was what seemed a toy train, giving a fairyland effect to the whole picture. But what were my feelings? I could not see these things, they were lost to me. My companions tried but were unable to convey to me the loveliness of the scene. No! I felt that the whole thing was lost. I felt depressed because I could not see it. There were but few birds to listen to—I always think that there is a little too much stress laid on this "bird singing stuff"; they do not seem to sing for me.

I think the deaf person has the better of the deal. He can see the lovely things. His ears are not blasted by the awful noises that burst in on us blind people. I even feel that deafness has a distinct advantage, particularly in our cities, for the roar and blare of traffic is appalling to a blind man; at times it blots out everything.

I am therefore of the opinion that while deafness and blindness are two of the greatest deprivations, blindness is the greater.

Yours, etc.,

W. SCRIMGEOUR.

EMPLOYMENT NOTES

An Unsurpassed Record.—Messrs. Sperry Gyroscope Co., Ltd., report that, in the eighteen months of their employment, the blind staff working in this firm have set up a record for punctuality and lack of absenteeism which is unsurpassed in the history of the firm.

The runners-up are the "otherwise disabled" group employed by the firm, but they in no way compare with the blind.

One worker, for instance, had only fifteen minutes of late time during the whole period, and that was on one day. It should be remembered that this period covers the months of flying-bomb and rocket attacks on London.

Only a Toy.—The research work being carried out by the National Institute's Employment Section Partially-sighted Officers in conjunction with Messrs. De Havilland Airscrews, Ltd., the Ministry of Labour and National Service and the Technical Staff of the National Institute for the Blind, has recently included an examination of the fullest use possible of Meccano. By its use, the partially-sighted officers have been able to eliminate the need for blue-print reading and to construct models giving perfect demonstrations of principle which have saved both time and

money in the manufacture of prototypes. In the view of the Section, the advantages to be gained by blind youngsters taking up Meccano as a hobby cannot be too much stressed. Manual dexterity, reasoning, and the assimilation of engineering principles are developed to a point which is not so easily obtained by other forms of toys. The claims of the manufacturers that Meccano is "engineering in miniature" have been amply justified.

What Now?—The war in Europe is over. With it will pass much of the war-time mass-production work in the factories. The Employment Section of the National Institute for the Blind has always taken the view that this is not a sound form of work in which to obtain permanent employment for the blind. From the beginning of its work, the approach of the Section has not been "Will you consider the blind as useful labour-gap fillers?" but "What can the blind do in your factory, both now and in peace time?" Already its policy has begun to bear fruit and it is worthy of note that firms such as Messrs. De Havilland Airscrews, Ltd., and Messrs. The Sperry Gyroscope Co. Ltd., are now contemplating the retention of their blind staffs on their peace-time production.

DISABLED SHOPKEEPERS

By H. G. JONES

SHOULD disabled soldiers start businesses on their own account? A blind grocer of twenty years' experience gives advice and a warning.

Some time ago, when my grocery and general stores was advertised for sale, a young man blinded in the war came to see me about it. He had been a pastrycook before he had joined up. He told me that it was impossible for him to go back to his old job and mess about with hot ovens. He had been taught massage, but patients were so few and far between that, before his capital dwindles away, he had decided to purchase some small business which he and his wife could run between them. They wanted to live in the country, and a grocery business made a special appeal to them.

I told them that my business was a general stores. We sold grocery, provisions, drapery, hardware and china, sweets, tobacco, newspapers and everything we could get to supply village needs.

"Splendid!" he cried enthusiastically. "It's just the business Mary and I have been looking for. What I can't do, Mary can. She's wonderful!"

Mary was a charming young woman. She had been a nurse before her marriage.

"Can Mary cut up a side of bacon, skin and quarter a cheese, weigh up sugar and soda?" I asked. "Has she a good head for business? Does she know how to serve customers, run up columns of figures, give change and keep smiling all the time?"

Mary admitted that she had no previous experience, but she was eager to learn, if only to gratify Tom.

They went away disappointed. I had to tell them that grocery was not a suitable business for blind persons. The great variety of articles and the multitude of prices make grocery unprofitable if you are compelled to employ others to work for you.

"Mine is a good, old-established business," I had explained. "I make a profit of £10 weekly, but when I have paid a manager and two assistants, and overhead expenses are taken into account, there is very little left for me to live upon."

My business is still for sale, but I am not getting out on the back of a blind or disabled soldier. To a man who is prepared to put his heart and soul into the work, who likes meeting all sorts of people during the day, and can always be cheer-

ful and obliging, it is a happy life and a good income can be earned, but to the disabled man—"No," emphatically.

Because so many soldiers will be getting comfortable war grants, there has been much loose talk about their becoming shopkeepers on their own account. The first essential in a shopkeeper is a love for buying and selling combined with good business ability. No one will spend a penny at your shop merely because you are blind. Most customers are bone selfish. They buy goods at a particular shop because it suits their convenience and because they know by experience that they can be sure of a square deal and get good value for their money. An attractive personality is an asset, but they expect efficiency and special attention to their requirements all the time.

What I have learned is the result of twenty years of experience as a blind grocer. Of course, I know now that I should have been much better off if I had not gone into business at all. All the same, my case is like that of so many soldiers to-day.

After twenty-five successful years as journalist, editor, and free lance story-writer, and when I was earning £1,000 a year, there came a tragic climax. I was playing golf one sunny afternoon; the next afternoon I was in darkness. It was the end of my little world. It meant, right about turn and the beginning of a new life. My problem was how to provide for a wife and six children, four of them still at school. My doctor supplied the solution.

"You've had a nasty shock, old man," he said. "You want rest and country air. If you have the capital, why not buy a small business in the country and get your girls and boys to run it for you."

The family were enthusiastic. I chose a grocery stores because, being a grocer's son, I could advise my young assistants while they were learning the business. One day we left London behind us and came to settle down in a remote rural village.

The business cost me £2,000. The freehold ten-roomed, oak-panelled house, with its lovely old-world garden and fruit trees, cost £1,000. The goodwill was valued at £500 and the stock at valuation worked out at £300 to £400; the rest was put in the bank as reserve. The takings were declared to be £80, and the profit £10 weekly.

It is here that I must give a warning to pros-

pective purchasers of one-man businesses. I was too trustful. Get an experienced business man or a chartered accountant to study the accounts closely before you decide to purchase. When it was too late, I discovered that many bad debts had been classed as good accounts. My predecessor had agreed to supply a local tea shop with £10 of goods weekly at wholesale prices. The £10 was included in the takings, but there wasn't a penny profit in it.

There were other matters I had never anticipated. Because we came from London we were looked upon with suspicion and regarded as foreigners.

"You don't belong here," one woman told me flatly. "I shall never deal at your shop."

After twenty years I must confess that she has kept her word.

"Farmer would give my husband the sack if I bought goods at your shop," another woman told me. That was because, some ten years before, a previous owner of the shop had dared to oppose one of our farmers at the local council election.

When the war began, I remarked to a woman customer that I had not seen her lately in the shop. "I've registered at the shop round the corner," she admitted. "You see, he's one of us. I used to attend the village school with him. We have to rally round him during wartime."

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Organist Wins Cup for Composition.—At the annual meeting of the Leinster Society of Organists and Choirmasters, held at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, it was announced that the Society's cup for original composition had been won by Mr. Daniel McNulty, the 24-year old blind organist of the Augustinian Church, John's lane, Dublin.

Blind Organist Now a Minister.—His many friends in Elgin will join in congratulating Mr. John Brown, formerly blind organist of the Elgin High Church, on having successfully completed his divinity course at the New College, Edinburgh. Mr. Brown has been licensed as a minister of the Church of Scotland by the Presbytery of Edinburgh.

For some time Mr. Brown has been acting as locum tenens at Carnwath, Lanarkshire. A highly-skilled musician, he holds the degrees of L.R.A.M., F.C.T.L., and Mus. Bac. He was educated at the Royal Blind School, Edinburgh, and Edinburgh University.

PERSONALIA

There can be few workers for the blind with a longer record of devoted service than Mrs. HATTERSLEY WARD, who has just retired. Three months after the Barclay Workshops for Blind Women were founded, forty years ago, to give employment to girls trained at the Barclay Home, Brighton, Mrs. Ward arrived after training in a Bradford Technical Institution, to take charge. She had then only four blind weavers under her direction; to-day the Barclay Workshops are responsible for about sixty knitters and weavers, and care in all for about 116 blind women, as workers, pensioners and former employees.

Mrs. Ward was never content that purchasers of blind-made goods should be actuated by "Pity the Poor Blind" motives. She insisted that the quality of the work, both in design and colouring, should bear comparison with the best products of workshops for seeing craftswomen; as a result Barclay Workshop goods are famous and there must be hundreds of householders to-day who are grateful for table-cloths, runners, curtains and bed-spreads that were bought in pre-coupon days and are still in use and still a pleasure to the eye.

Mrs. Ward's pride in good work was not, however, all; she took equal pride in the happiness of the workers, and never spared herself in their interests and welfare.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

South African National Council.—The present Report of the Council covers the work of three years—1941-1943 inclusive, and includes the work of 17 affiliated Societies. One important event chronicled in the Report is the provision under the Pension Laws Amendment Act, 1944, whereby registered blind natives are eligible for pensions; until then the Blind Persons Act affected only the European and coloured blind. There are approximately 27,000 blind natives registered in the Union, and as one would naturally expect, "additional registrations take place by the day." An interesting note in the Report states that the National Council has urged the amendment of the Blind Persons Act, whereby every blind person would receive the

pension irrespective of means—a move similar to that envisaged in our own proposed “handicap allowance.” New institutions founded during the period under review include a hostel for prevention of blindness and new workshops and homes, both under the auspices of the Transvaal Society for the Non-European Blind; the Blindness prevention hostel is a fully equipped hospital for treatment of eye diseases, the first of its kind in South Africa. The Transvaal Society has also been presented with a site for the establishment of a workshop and homes for trained married blind natives; here cottages will be built and let, with a small piece of ground, to native blind workers and their families.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Miss Dorothy Cleaver, a member of the staff of the National Institute for the Blind, who died in a London hospital on April 26th, aged 50. Miss Cleaver, who was partially sighted, was educated privately and at the Royal Normal College. She was for some time employed by the Metropolitan Society for the Blind as a home teacher, and also worked as a copyist for the National Library and as a private teacher of Braille and shorthand-typing. She was responsible for a recently published Manual for Telephone Operators, designed to simplify Braille shorthand for the use of such operators. She will, however, be chiefly remembered for her devoted services, extending over many years, in connection with the National Association of Blind Workers, of which she was latterly the Hon. General Secretary, and she gave valuable help in editing the Association's Braille organ, “The Tribune.” She was unusually well-informed on matters of blind welfare, and was keenly interested in everything affecting the work and status of the blind; facts and figures never daunted her, and her sympathies were always enlightened and practical.

James Nisbet Swann, of Inglehurst, Malvern, on March 6th, at the age of 87. For the greater part of his life he had been on the staff of Malvern College, for 22 years a Housemaster there. On his retirement in 1918, he devoted himself to public service of various kinds in Malvern, particularly in connection with the Public Library and the local hospital, serving on the committee of both till late in 1944, when ill-health made further participation impossible. He had also taken up the work of transcribing books into Braille for the National Institute's Students' Library, on the encouragement of a Malvern

neighbour, Colonel Stafford, and since 1930, he had transcribed 113 volumes. In November, 1944, he completed his last Braille volume. He would have been the last man on this earth to vaunt abroad the many services he rendered to others in the course of his life, but, instinctively methodical as he was to the last, he set down in a notebook the record of his progress: the day when each book was begun, the day when it was finished, and the number of pages each volume required.

His second marriage in 1925, to Grace Cochrane of Etwall, Derbyshire, was a singularly happy one, and her death in the autumn of 1944, undoubtedly accelerated his own. She learnt Braille in order to help him, and soon proved a quick reader and most efficient censor of his work. There is pathos in the last entry in Nisbet Swann's record book “Together” Vol. 1, begun February 5th, work suspended May—November, finished November 22nd. Pages: T.P. 2. Cts 2. Text 172. Notes 20. Total 196. Vol. 2 to be done by another Transcriber.”

It was in May that Grace Swann was first known to be seriously ill. By November Nisbet Swann realised he no longer had the strength to carry on. But he finished the job in hand.

Frank Geoffrey Williams, of South Shore, Blackpool, aged 66, who became Manager of the Blackpool and Fylde Society for the Blind in 1928.

TO G. HOLME, Esq.*

From a pupil of his who has recently gained her certificate for Braille transcription).

TO all aspiring Braillists be it known,
They cannot dare that steep ascent alone;
A kindly Mentor is their only hope,
Whose sapient counsel forms a trusty rope.

As Virgil guided Dante through the shades,
He leads their tottering footsteps up the grades;
Nor fails to point the doom awaiting such
As write in full “although,” “perhaps,” or
“much.”

To everlasting torment he allots
The feeble folk who faintly form their dots;
The deepest Hell for those—a hopeless case—
Who leave two Lower Signs adrift in space.

Impatient tyros, thirsting to begin
A stage beyond their grasp (a deadly sin),
Recall their fancy ere it starts to roam—
The soul returns, remembering its Holme.

E.M.S.

* Well-known to our readers as formerly Hon. Sec and Co-Founder of “Fellowship House” Holiday Home for the Deaf-blind, Hoylake.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The Prices given are Net.

Dances.

19259	Box, Cox and Ilda.—Just a Little Fond Affection, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	6d.
19260	Kern, J.—More and More, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	6d.
19261	Rose, F.—Always Yours, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	6d.
19262	Wilson, T.—The Little Things that Mean so Much, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>	6d.

BRAILLE BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and Blind Individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given unless otherwise stated. Books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covered unless otherwise stated.

Braille Instruction Book:

Complete Introduction to Braille, Part III. This final part of the new Braille Course contains twelve exercises on compound contractions and abbreviations, and a number of revision passages. The average pupil should find this part self-explanatory. Pocket size, interlined, stiff covers, loose-leaf Pamphlet. (19091). 4d. net. E14.

Vocational:

Pruning Trees and Bushes. Comprises two pamphlets issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Pamphlet. 19286. 1s. E8.

MOON BOOKS.

4743-4751. The Forest and the Fort, by Hervey Allen. 9 vols. (Limited Edition.)

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS LIBRARY.

	Vols.
Theology:	
Peake's Commentary on the Bible, Introductory Chapters	5
Social and Political:	
Alexander, Horace. India since Cripps	2
Pearse, Innes H. and Crocker, Lucy H. The Peckham Experiment	6
Economics:	
Robinson, Joan. An Essay in Marxian Economics	2
Triffin, Robert. Monopolistic Competition and General Equilibrium Theory	4
Education:	
Partridge, E. H. Freedom in Education: The Function of the Public Boarding School	2
Psychology:	
Collins, Mary and Drever, James. Experimental Psychology	6
Thouless, Robert H. An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion	4
Literature:	
<i>Criticism</i>	
Fowlie, Wallace. The Spirit of France: Studies in Modern French Literature	2
<i>Poetry</i>	
Wavell, A. P. (Field-Marshal Viscount Wavell), ed. Other Men's Flowers: An Anthology of Poetry	4
Italian:	
Borsa, Mario. La Cascina sul Po	2

History:

Bryant, Arthur. English Saga, 1840-1940	7
Jackson, J. H. The Post-war World, 1918-1934	8
Ludwig, Emil. The Germans	6

Miscellaneous:

Hay, Ian. The Unconquered Isle: The Story of Malta, G.C.	3
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NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

and

Northern Branch,
5, St. John Street, Manchester, 3.

ADDITIONS.

Fiction:

Albrand, Martha. Without Orders	3
Barton, Reynier. Word Without End	4
Bottomo, Phyllis. Within the Cup	6
Clark, Gideon. Strange Pathway	5
Clarke, Isabel C. Where the Apple Reddens	6
Dinnis, Enid. Undercross	3
Fenton, Frank. Place in the Sun	5
Glaspell, Susan. Norma Ashe	5
Goolden, Barbara. Swings and Roundabouts	5
Holme, Constance. Old Road from Spain	5
Laverty, Maura. Never No More	4
Pargeter, Edith. She Goes to War	5
Pauli, Ebba. Hermit and his Friends	1
Roberts, Denys Kilham, <i>Editor</i> . Penguin Parade, Series 5	4
Salmond, J. B. Flower of the Flax	3
Sandys, Oliver. Poppet and Co.	6
Seymour, Beatrice Kean. False Spring	5
Walsh, Maurice. Spanish Lady	6

Religion:

Cailliet, Emile. Clue to Pascal	2
Down the Ages. Talks on English Church History	3
Houselander, Francis Caryll. This War is the Passion	2
Mash, H. E. Beresford. Up From the Gates	1
Sheppard, W. T. Limmer. Great Hymns and their Stories	2

Missions:

Bowden-Smith, G. China, the Old and the New	2
Henrich, Ruth. Fun, Fear or Faith (The Church in Burma)	1

Theosophy:

Rittelmeyer, Friedrich. Meditation	4
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Sociology:

Brittain, Vera. Humiliation with Honour. (Letters on Political and Social Questions)	2
Forster, F. Margaret. School for Life (A Study of the People's Colleges in Sweden)	2
Hanchant, W. L., <i>Editor</i> . England is Here (Speeches and Writings of the Prime Ministers from 1721 to 1943)	6
Macmillan, Harold. Middle Way (Picture of Social and Economic Conditions in the 1930's)	6
Macmurray, John. Constructive Democracy	1
Massingham, H. J. Tree of Life	3
Morton, J. B. New Ireland	1

Fine Arts:

Gaunt, William. Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy	5
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History:

Crankshaw, Edward. Russia and Britain	2
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War:	<i>Vols.</i>
Haldane, Charlotte. Russian Newsreel	4
Terkelsen, T. M. Denmark: Her King and her People	1
Travel and Adventure:	
Campbell, Commander A. B. Yarns of the Seven Seas	2
Sava, George. Valley of Forgotten People (Travels through the Caucasus, 1918) ..	4
Shipton, Eric. Upon that Mountain ..	4
Biography:	
Wilson, P. W. The General: The Story of Evangeline Booth	1
Juvenile:	
Hadath, Gunby. The Swinger	4
Grade I:	
Young, E. R. William	6

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All home teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.

SCHOOL OF TELEPHONY, CARDIFF.

There are a few vacancies for pupils for a course of training in Telephony. Subjects include: Braille, Shorthand, Typewriting and Switch Board Operating. Course approved by Ministry of Education. Applications to the Secretary, Cardiff Institute for the Blind, Longcross Street, Cardiff.

CHALFONT COLONY SCHOOLS FOR EPILEPTICS (recognised by the Ministry of Education). Assistant Mistress (resident or non-resident) required for small class of blind epileptic boys and girls. Burnham Scale plus Special School increment. For application form and particulars, apply to Headmistress, Chalfont Colony Schools, Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks.

BRUSH MAKING. Capable man with experience and sound knowledge of the trade required for position of Foreman. Wage £5 10s. od., plus present cost of living bonus of £1 3s. od., per week. Apply by letter, stating age, experience, and enclosing copies of testimonials to The Manager, Workshops for the Adult Blind, Whickham View, Benwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

LIVERPOOL HOME TEACHING SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND require a **Certificated Female Home Teacher.** The person appointed will be required to contribute to Superannuation Fund. Apply immediately, stating age, experience and qualifications, with copies of two recent testimonials to Hon. Sec., Cornwallis St., Liverpool, 1, marking envelope "Home Teacher."

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (TOWN & COUNTY) ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the permanent position of **Female Home Teacher** for the Blind. Applicants should be able to drive a car, which will be provided. Salary according to qualifications and experience. Application to the Secretary, 25 Gray Street, Northampton, with copies of three recent testimonials.

INSTRUCTOR for Telephony School, Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth, required. Ability to teach braille and typing essential. Successful candidate will be required to undergo course of training in Telephony for the purpose of instructing in this subject when proficient. Salary £150 per annum, resident. Apply for application form to Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

HOME TEACHERS' EXAMINATION, 1946. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

SOMERSET COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of **Sighted Home Teacher** (certificated). Salary £156 per annum, rising to £208, plus War Bonus, at present £48 per annum. Candidates must be able to drive a car, and be willing to reside in or near Frome. A medical certificate will be required. Applications stating age, qualifications and experience, with names and addresses of two references should be sent not later than June 4th, 1945, to the Secretary, Somerset County Association for the Blind, 3 The Crescent, Taunton.

CITY OF SALFORD.

Home Teacher and Visitor of Blind persons required (female). Salary Scales: Certificated, £156 to £208 per annum, plus War Bonus, at present £48 4s. 8d. per annum; Uncertificated, £130 per annum, plus War Bonus. Uniform clothing provided.

Previous service as a Certificated Home Teacher with a Local Authority or an Agency for the Blind will rank for service on the salary scale.

The person selected for appointment will be required to pass a medical examination with a view to inclusion in the Superannuation Scheme under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937.

Applications in candidates' own handwriting, stating age, experience and qualifications, accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the Director of Education, Education Offices, Chapel Street, Salford 3, not later than Thursday, May 31st, 1945.

H. H. TOMSON,
Town Clerk.

NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Applications are invited for the post of **Female (sighted) Certificated Home Teacher and Visitor for the Blind.** The successful candidate will be seconded for duty to the Cleveland and South Durham Institute for the Blind, Middlesbrough.

The appointment is subject to the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination. The salary is £156, rising by annual increments of £13 to a maximum of £208 per annum, together with a cost-of-living bonus at present at the rate of 18s. 6d. per week. The commencing salary will be fixed in accordance with previous experience.

Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, and accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, should be forwarded to the undersigned not later than the 30th May, 1945.

H. G. THORNLEY,
Clerk of the County Council.
County Hall, Northallerton.
1st May, 1945

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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TOWARDS VOLUNTARY IDEALS

By ANNE KEEBLE

BLIND Welfare, perhaps more than any other branch of social service, has need of sincere men and women who can afford to give voluntary help, ranging from those who go out to the homes as readers, shoppers, menders and guides, to those who feel qualified to tackle the intricacies of Braille transcription; and it is largely due to our devoted army of unknown and unpaid workers that publishing bodies can cater so well for the Braille reader without rocketing overhead costs, and the Home Visitor be assured that some of her people have loyal friends at hand to render many services she cannot accomplish herself.

To pay just tribute to our many friends already undertaking these services is to add to their number more recruits of the right type, for hundreds of lonely blind people still await the kindly friend, social and pastime clubs need extra help, and the administrators of blind welfare can be relied upon to provide numerous other opportunities for the adaptable volunteer.

How can we attract the right people to our side? Appreciating the need, and the urge to service that fills that need, how can we best co-operate to form a successful bond between the paid official and the voluntary helper?

It is a regrettable fact that some social workers look upon the volunteer rather as the trained nurse eyes the member of the V.A.D.—to be tolerated on occasion, but worthy only of minor tasks. Self-complacency is not usually to blame for this attitude, for extra help is often urgently wanted; rather it may be the wary recollection of past experiments in which the social worker figured as the official victim of amateur blunders.

While the paid worker is rightly expected to assume responsibility, a formidable obstacle to mutual trust is that the voluntary worker is answerable to no master. She is in the privileged position of being able to come and go as she pleases, work according to her own standards, efficient or otherwise, and any correction means the risk of offence and future absence.

True, the purely personal sense of loyalty results in splendid service from the majority of people who come forward, but as in every other sphere of life, the unreliable few whose faults redound on recipients and officials alike are responsible for much of the intolerance already mentioned.

Slum districts provide ample opportunities for voluntary service, and it is here where the wrong

type is most disastrous, and at the same time, most common.

First, mention of the "grand lady," the prime destroyer of all our voluntary ideals, who wishes to go "slumming" as part of life's adventures. She invades small homes without pausing to study the human factor in any way. Home Visitors may find her trying to reorganise social clubs, arriving late, and invariably discussing religion, for poor people are always supposed to be in urgent need of conversion. This lady adopts human "pets," opens her generous purse to the most plausible tale of woe, irrespective of the more truly informed social worker. Members are spoken to in a loud, forceful voice; her wide experience intrudes into every sentence, and she will chat brightly of her travels abroad to folk who have never had a holiday in their lives.

Conversation must be tactfully chosen to avoid giving offence. The subject of vermin was mentioned to one such lady in the secret hope of convincing her that slum houses were in more urgent need of reform than the human souls who dwelt therein and still retained their decency. That lady never appeared again. The fear of attracting a flea to her person was far stronger than her social conscience.

The "grand lady" has numerous protégées who are persuaded to take the plunge into slumland when she relates her adventures with the "poor darlings," and their desperate plight but for her purse and power, ending something like this: "I'm utterly exhausted for days after, but one must do something for the poor things," subtly implying the inefficiency of social administration and trained worker alike.

However, "slumming" is a phase which soon passes, so although the grand lady and her contemporaries can ferment real trouble on occasion, she seldom intrudes for long.

The more dangerous would-be volunteer is the lady who, believing herself to be one of the world's born organisers, bustles, dictates and acts according to her own convictions, without seeing the unhappy result on others. Such people, financially protected from the competitive rebuffs of a wage-earning existence, acquire knowledge of social problems mainly through book-study and gossip, and proceed to descend on the branch appearing to be in most urgent need of reform.

Few people will deny that some present day social services do need vigorous criticism, but let it come from the trained specialist, not from self-styled "indispensables" who sit on numerous committees, ascend lecture platforms, open charity bazaars and are lauded in the local press

without gaining the most primary knowledge of the district and its inhabitants.

The passion to manage others can be gratified so easily at the expense of the needy; dabbling in many social problems gives a superficial knowledge which may at first deceive the trained social worker, so this self-confident lady finds many ways of entering the social field, and causing just resentment of her voluntary efforts.

A typical example concerns Annie, a mild old woman of seventy, whose failing sight made her partially dependent on others, but had lived alone happily enough until her landlady wanted to move, but—concerned about Annie's future—contacted the local parson. A voluntary church worker appeared and proceeded to find a new room. It was a small back on the second floor, and the only tap was in the yard. Annie politely refused this. The lady procured another room, ten minutes walk from the shopping centre and only reached by crossing a main road. Once again Annie, sensibly aware that she would have to pay for errands, when she could manage local shops herself, refused to be tempted. How that lady fumed! Old people were a nuisance; blind folk should not live alone; Annie was definitely mental and ought to be in an Institution. All this was put in writing to H.Q. after three meetings. Yet a spirited championing of the old woman's mental and physical powers by the Home Visitor who had visited for years drew forth the condescending retort that the lady had experience with mental defectives and could recognise weak spots not apparent to others. Meanwhile, Annie speedily found herself a new room near the shops, and—five years later—is still residing there quite satisfactorily.

And now what of the smaller obstacles in the path to mutual trust? Again quoting social and pastime clubs as providing instances of minor misunderstandings, what do we need of the voluntary worker in this field?

The majority of volunteers come forward with hearts full of sympathy, but with limited practical experience. If of amenable disposition, they have all the natural attributes required, for while sympathy is an emotion needing guidance, and amateur-teaching improvement, what better coach at hand than the trained worker who has trod the thorny path of experience?

There are mutual failings here. Certain lack of confidence prevents some people from realising that to attend one week and stay away two, makes them of mythical value to the organiser, who really hopes to depend on them, but omits

to tell them so. Others join up firmly convinced that their own methods of teaching, entertaining, etc., are superior to those in existence. Finally, when relegated to such minor tasks as dispensing tea, they lose heart and disappear, rather unjustly blaming the permanent workers for not appreciating their efforts. A little tact, the mutual pooling of ideas, and recognition that established customs may, in fact, be best, would make such volunteers the adaptable angels of our dreams.

Other worthy people whose efforts often merely irritate include the single ladies who cannot resist giving household advice to grandmothers, and musicians who become offended because middle-aged Cockney women cannot be made to appreciate classical music or part songs. The ardent politician needs watching too; one such enthusiast produced disastrous results on a gathering of old men, including foreign Jews, Gentiles with Fascist views, an aged Tory who was taken ill after an argument with a Communist docker, and a sprinkling of those who hate all forms of Government.

In blind welfare some voluntary helpers start with strange ideas about blind people, and show real reluctance to talk to them. Sentimental pity is unlimited, but it requires patient effort to convince them that blind people are not helpless imbeciles, only able to understand conversation carried on *at* them through sighted guides. Others, assuming deafness comes with all forms of blindness apparently believe that shouting is the only way to get their personality across. Yet tell the same persons of the accom-

plishments of the blind and they remark with utmost conviction: "Oh yes, wonderful, but, of course, the blind always get extra sense of touch and hearing to compensate."

Remarkable how easily these opposite beliefs can be co-ordinated!

And now, in closing, the writer in paying tribute to the many sincere and helpful volunteers met personally, would revive the memory of one lady in particular who acted as a club registrar for several years. She was never absent without giving good notice, she arrived well before opening time, and kept her books with admirable efficiency. She had a natural charm which did not vary according to her company. She seldom advised, but gave undivided attention to the tales of unhappiness or worry unfolded by many humble folk, who recognised her as a real friend.

Her purse was light, but for all our natural reactions to those who are overladen with this world's goods and come within the sphere of the needy, nevertheless we count the generous heart far more precious.

The writer hopes this article may be read by all the classes mentioned, and offers the last example as the perfect social voluntary worker, who, were they numerous enough, could do magnificent work in this field. The tasks awaiting them are limitless, and readily to be supplied by any social worker with whom they co-operate, and most important, their time and inclinations are not governed by the set principles of any employing body, to whom every paid worker must conform.

HOME NEWS

National Insurance.—A strong deputation appointed by the National Institute for the Blind, representing the co-ordinated system of Blind Welfare in England and Wales, and the Special Committee on Blind Welfare in Scotland, was courteously received by the Minister of National Insurance, Sir William Jowitt, on 17th May. The deputation, which was introduced by Mr. Fred Messer, M.P., and the Hon. L. W. Joynson-Hicks, M.P., urged the Minister to provide from national funds a National Handicap Pension of £1 per week (free of the Means Test, and additional to earnings or insurance benefits) for all registered blind persons who are not "within the responsibility of an Education Authority." The Minister conceded that the blind had a strong case for special treatment,

and, while unable to make commitments at this stage, undertook to discuss the question of the National Handicap Pension with his Cabinet colleagues.

America's Gift of Braille Books to British Blind.—On behalf of the Library of Congress and other interested parties, the American Library in the American Embassy, London, has presented a second consignment of Braille books to the National Library for the Blind. Most of these represented books recently done into Braille in the U.S., or books which may have been missed over here during the war years. Dr. R. H. Heindel, the Director of the American Library which initiated this gesture, explained that he hoped more such volumes would be coming in the future. Among the books are

Mrs. Roosevelt's *My Days*, Morley's *Kitty Foyle*, Coffin's *Kennebee*, and Jordan's *Apple in the Attic*.

No Censorship Required for Ireland.—As from 7th June, 1945, Censorship Permits will no longer be required for postal despatches, or despatches otherwise than by post, from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, or from Great Britain or Northern Ireland to Eire. Germany and Austria have been added to the list of territories to which the censorship regulations still apply.

Postal Regulations for France and Belgium.—The National Institute for the Blind has been informed by the Postal and Telegraph Censorship Department that Braille literature may now be despatched to France and Belgium at the usual blind literature rates up to the normal weight limit of 7 kilograms (15 lbs.). In addition, but subject to the conditions already laid down in the Post Office regulations, i.e., that they must be sent by or addressed to an officially recognised Institution for the Blind, plates for embossing blind literature and voice records intended solely for the use of the blind, may be despatched. All despatches are, of course, required to be censored by the National Institute for the Blind and forwarded under its Censorship Permit in the same way as despatches to other censorable countries.

Re-Education of the Eye Muscles.—A report on what has been done for thousands of young men who received orthoptic treatment—the re-education of the eye muscles—in the R.A.F., whose subsequent careers have been followed, will shortly be ready, says *The Daily Telegraph*.

It will show that success has been gained in a high percentage of the cases and that results have been most satisfactory.

When war began it was found that numbers of potential pilots who were otherwise A1 had to be rejected because of defective eye muscle balance. They were given orthoptic treatment, and at least 2,000 men who had previously been rejected were then passed as fit for flying duties. The men were given training for an hour each day for about a fortnight at instruments designed to improve eye muscle balance. Often the trouble arose after men had been flying for more than 100 hours, when their judgment became blurred and they made "ropey" landings. Treatment, however, did not end with their cure.

A year later the same patients were required to fill in a questionnaire, stating number of flying hours done, type of duty, whether bomber, fighter, night flying or reconnaissance, whether landings were correct. At the end of a second year, a further questionnaire was sent to those still flying. The results have proved beyond all doubt the immense value of this work carried out by the 33 women orthoptists in the R.A.F.

Other pioneer work they have done has included training photographic readers of pictures taken by air reconnaissance. By improving their stereoscopic vision, the readers are more readily able to recognise distance and depth of objects on photographs.

The report on the results of orthoptics in the R.A.F. will be published probably this autumn.

EMPIRE NEWS

Dadar School for the Blind, Bombay.—Mr. Ras Mohun Halder, Principal of this school, was admitted to the Ph.D. degree in Sociology of the University in Bombay recently, his doctorate dissertation being "Society and the Visually Handicapped." His earlier "The Visually Handicapped in India" was reviewed in our columns some time ago. Mr. Halder was recently invited by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay, to give a course of lectures on the Sociological Problems of the Physically Handicapped.

Training School for Blinded Africans.—The Government of Kenya has approved of the payment of a subsidy to the Salvation Army for the training of blinded ex-soldiers, and a small school has been built in Nairobi. A site for a larger and permanent centre, for 100

pupils, has been chosen at Thika, some thirty miles away from the capital, and building is about to begin. This training centre will be operated by the Salvation Army on behalf of the Government.

We have just heard from Mrs. Colonel Barrell that the results of the Proficiency Braille Preliminary Examinations, which blind students in Kenya have recently taken, are very satisfactory. The examiner was Mrs. Pirie, a St. Dunstan's teacher in the 1914-18 war, and in a letter to Mrs. Barrell she says: "It was a pleasure taking the Examination; the students all seemed keen, and I do think they have done you credit. All the ground work is excellent, and speed will come later. Your work with these students is a real inspiration."

The Blind of Ireland.—A Committee has been appointed to make recommendations as to the educational facilities necessary for the blind, said Mr. Tomas O Deirg, Eire Minister of Education, speaking at the annual general meeting of the National Council for the Blind of Ireland last month. As Minister for Education he was specially interested in the education of the blind. Comparatively few were born blind, the majority becoming affected either through disease of the eye or through accident. In respect of the diseases which led to blindness, such as trachoma, he impressed on parents and teachers the very great importance of calling attention to eye trouble so that medical aid might be sought in time and remedial measures provided which, if applied in time, would, to a considerable extent, prevent impaired vision or total blindness. For children born blind he urged that they be sent as early as possible to the schools in Dublin which specialised in the education of the blind. In these schools the children were taught the ordinary school subjects and, furthermore, to care for and depend on themselves, and to overlook, and perhaps in time forget, their handicap.

The Minister said that, apart from grants from the Dublin Board of Health, subsidies from the

Dublin Corporation, and a small grant from the National Institute for the Blind, London, all the Council's revenues were obtained from voluntary subscriptions and donations, and from the individual personal efforts made by the friends of the Council in organising flag days, etc.

"It is a very notable fact, therefore," he said, "indeed, the most outstanding consideration which must impress an outsider, and I hope the general public, that your work depends to such a very great extent upon voluntary support. It is reassuring to find that so much has and is being done through voluntary effort, and this position is still more satisfying at a time when there is a trend, which I fear is becoming more pronounced as time goes on, an attitude of mind which leads people to look more and more to the State or to local authorities to make still greater provision towards the relief of all affliction, suffering and poverty, and to depend less and less upon individual and community enterprise and charitable impulse."

Continuing, Mr. O Deirg said he was glad of the opportunity to pay a tribute to the deep spirit of Christian charity and of helpfulness which animated the work of the Council and its members and the branches which were so active throughout the country.

FOREIGN NEWS

Agricultural Training for the Blind.—The Barnes School for the Blind, Henniker, New Hampshire, U.S.A., under the direction of the New Hampshire Association for the Blind, is an agricultural training centre for the blind established to enable blind persons to train in modern farming. It consists of a farm house with poultry plant housing 1,000 layers with brooding facilities for 2,500 chicks. There is a dairy farm with feed for five cows and land for general crops and garden. The full course covers ten months, and every effort is made at the end of training to interest farmers in the employment of blind workers, though naturally the school cannot guarantee placement. The courses given are in poultry farming, dairy farming (a "short practical course in which the student learns to milk and handle cattle, feed and manage dairy animals for production, and obtain a working knowledge of practical dairy farming"), livestock breeding and farm management.

St. Dunstan's in Germany.—The staff and patients of the Prisoner-of-War Eye Hospital and Braille School are now safely home. The school was a recognised branch of St. Dunstan's and taught both British and American blind.

It was run in conjunction with the Eye Hospital which dealt with the eye casualties of prisoners of all Allied nations and had just over a hundred beds. The hospital staff consisted of an ophthalmic specialist and six RAMC orderlies, and the school staff of one officer (English), one Australian Air Force warrant officer, one corporal (English), one sergeant (New Zealand), and one private (English). The school taught ordinary typewriting, Braille reading, Braille writing, Braille shorthand, business correspondence, and so on. It also had equipment for cobbling, carpentry, basketwork, and string-bag making, and at various times taught massage, history, geography, and economics. Most of the men learnt to play some musical instrument—piano, accordion, and violin were the most popular—and at one time the school had an orchestra and even put on an "all blind" variety show lasting about 2½ hours, complete with one-act plays and stage dancing.

The school library was equipped with an excellent selection of Braille books, educational and popular, and it had an extensive and varied collection of talking book records, English and American. A very popular item was the com-

plete sound track of the Walt Disney film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The school also had plenty of popular and classical gramophone records. Through the timely arrival, and willing help, of the American Third Army, all this equipment is now back at St. Dunstan's.

A Swedish Tribute to English Braille Periodicals.—Mr. Harald Thilander, of Stock-sund, Sweden, writing to a friend in England on the cessation of hostilities in Europe, says:

"Oh, what a joy—what a joy—that we shall be able to get the English Braille magazines again. The *World Digest* was wonderful; and those books, *Pandas*, which were published for a shilling apiece—how we liked some of them!"

Mr. Thilander also says: "We get Braille letters from Norway and Denmark full of enthusiasm and gratitude to England and America."

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

American Instructors of the Blind.

The American Association of Instructors of the Blind, normally held in alternate years, met in 1940 and did not meet again (owing to war-time travel restrictions) until June of last year. The Report has just been received. As always, the papers read covered a very wide range; general health, eye conditions, the backward child, the partially sighted child, the teaching of Braille, the education of the negro blind, are but a few of the subjects considered.

In a paper on the mentally retarded, a plea was made for as little segregation as practicable; the backward child will eventually have to live in a world of normal people, and isolation from normal children during schooldays was said to be a poor preparation for adult life. To the view that the normal child's pace was slowed down by the retarded, the speaker put forward the other side of the picture—that the normal child might "make constructive use of his powers by helping the slower."

Mr. Ellis, Superintendent of the American Printing House, Mr. Lysens, of the Minnesota Braille and Sight Saving School, and Mrs. Hathaway, of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, all spoke of the need for a better supply of sight-saving textbooks for the 65,000 partially sighted children in the States who need such books. As a commercial undertaking, the printing of large-type textbooks may be out of the question, but Mr. Ellis thought that the American Printing House might undertake to develop a department for printing such books, though care would have to be taken that the original purpose of the organisation should be safeguarded. Those of us who, in this country, have had to write to enquirers to the effect that nothing is published in large print, except for the very young child, cannot help wondering whether, as the Talking Book is common to readers on both sides of the Atlantic

and Standard English Braille has made embossed reading material available for American and British readers alike, something could not be done to provide books for the partially sighted in the same way; differences in American and British spelling are slight, and there are many standard works equally readable in all English-speaking countries. If readers in Britain and the Dominions are added to readers in the States, might not large-print editions of standard literature command a reasonably good sale?

The Blind Baby.

"The Early Training of Blind Children," by the Rev. Dermot Casey, S.J. (price 3d.), has just been published by the *Irish Messenger*, 5, Great Denmark Street, Dublin. It can be most warmly recommended to Home Teachers and to the parents of blind children anxious to do their best in a task that presents many difficulties.

Within the small compass of about 30 pages, it gives much valuable advice, and is characterised throughout by common-sense and a lack of sentimentality. "Whoever has charge of a blind child should first of all be a liberator," writes Fr. Casey, and this is the keynote of the whole. He shows how the blind baby's senses must be stimulated, how he must be encouraged in physical activity and in habits of independent movement, and how he must be trained to become a social being, learning through the give and take of ordinary life "to effect a balance between his own interests and those of other people." There are no residential nursery schools for blind children in Eire, but Fr. Casey makes a strong plea for the early education of the school-child, pointing out that it should begin at the age of five and not be postponed until eight or nine. Those who know anything of the difficulties of educating blind children in Eire will welcome his words, and hope that they may bear fruit.

BLIND GARDENER'S SYSTEM of BULB CULTIVATION

By *FRANK EYRE.*

I HAVE evolved my own system of cultivating bulbs to provide a succession of flowers for cutting—daffodils and pheasant eye narcissus in March and April, tulips in April and May, Spanish iris in late May, and gladiolus primulinus in July. Other blind gardeners may like to adopt, or adapt, or improve upon my method.

Most of my physical energy is spent in utility gardening—by which I mean the production of food. This bulb growing sideline fits into the general scheme without sacrificing to any extent the supply of vegetables. I also grow some sweet peas and wallflowers and a few other blooms in rows in the kitchen garden, but I leave flower growing for effect in borders surrounding the house to sighted manipulation.

So far, my daffodils and narcissus are all naturalised in the grass, where they bloom year after year without attention. The most effective treatment, if one is starting on such naturalisation, is to scatter the bulbs and plant them where they fall; but they bloom earlier if set in broken ground. I hope to plant a few hundred in rows, where they are best left for two or three seasons without disturbance, only lifted and replanted every two or three years so as to increase stock and avoid congestion.

Tulips are my chief bulb crop and this is the way I manage them. In early October I dig land from which potatoes have been lifted. Such a site is reasonably rich and clean, for potatoes have to be manured and the cultivation of the crop ensures the cleaning of the land. Setting a line, I take out a shallow trench with a three-clawed cultivator, a short handled tool, and then, making sure that my line is not hitched on a stone or a clod, I press in a row of bulbs immediately under the line and not more than two inches from bulb to bulb. Covering up the bulbs so that they are buried to a depth of about three inches, I change my line for the next row, using the width of my fist as a measure, and repeat the process until I have set six rows. Then, leaving a space for the purpose of access to weed and gather the crop, I proceed to set another block of six rows, and so on until all my bulbs are well and truly planted. Early in spring the first green spikes appear, and towards the end of April and in early May the blooms are ready for cutting. This season I have had over four thousand

blooms, a source of pleasure to my friends, much satisfaction to myself, and some profit.

When the glamour of the flowering period is done, the work begins, for as soon as the tops of the plants begin to die I lift them one by one and "heel" them in a shallow trench to ripen in a mass. This lifting process is somewhat tedious, for it must be done carefully or many bulbs remain in the ground and become a nuisance and a waste. The land so cleared is then dug deeply and manured and becomes a prosaic site for a crop of brassica. The reason for lifting the tulips every year is, first, to use the land to the maximum, secondly, to harvest the bulbs and thus increase stock, and thirdly, to prevent the infection called "tulip fire," a fungoid disease which attacks the bulbs if they are left in the ground. Indeed, tulips should not be grown on the same site more than once in three years or there is danger of the infection.

Choosing dry weather after the "heeled in" plants have become brittle, I gather up my bulbs and spread them out on my loft floor. Here they remain until a convenient day in early autumn, when I divide them and grade them according to size; it will be found that the stock has increased by at least fifty per cent., little bulbs having become big ones, while the mature ones have divided or made offsets. Such bulbs as are deemed to be surplus are then available for disposal as presents or by sale. Small bulbs do not always bloom in their first year, but I always plant a number of them to nurse up to maturity.

Spanish Iris are treated in practically the same way as tulips. I am developing a stock of these bulbs. The blooms are much in demand as they are a favourite table decoration, especially when bunched with some light and feathery subject such as gypsophila, or with appropriate foliage.

Gladiolus primulinus are not quite hardy. They are therefore not set until April, and the crop is lifted before the danger of severe frost. They are best spaced more generously than tulips. The graceful flowers have a wide range of colour and are much in demand. I am growing nearly a thousand of them this season. When harvested they will be laid out in my loft after the tulips have been graded; they

have to be laid out in such a manner that the green tops are exposed to the air until they become quite sere and brittle.

With the necessary land available and with adequate accommodation for the drying and storing processes, it will be realised from the above outline that the possibilities in playing the bulb game are quite considerable. Good bulbs are valuable, as they are in short supply and there is a ready market for the flowers.

Much patience is necessary and a lot of hard work is involved when planting and harvesting the crop. My stock of bulbs are all the progeny of an original hundred tulips and fifty gladioli purchased many years ago. I do not specialise in varieties or colours, but grow them mixed, leaving the classification to the sighted help accorded at cutting and bunching time. The gathering of the blooms is no small business, though it is for periods all too brief.

AMERICAN EYE BANK FOR SIGHT RESTORATION

FORMATION of The Eye Bank for Sight Restoration, Inc., which will collect and preserve healthy corneal tissue from human eyes for transplanting to blind persons who have lost their sight because of corneal defects, has been announced in New York City. The organization, national in scope, has been incorporated under the laws of New York State, and 22 leading hospitals in New York City are now affiliated with it; in addition, 20 outstanding ophthalmologists throughout the country will serve in an advisory capacity. The headquarters are at 210 East 64th Street, New York City.

Stanley Resor, president of the J. Walter Thompson Advertising Company, has been elected president of The Eye Bank. Other officers are Dr. R. Townley Paton, vice-president; Cyril B. Hartman, secretary; Walter C. Baker, treasurer; and Mrs. Henry Breckinridge, executive director.

Between 10,000 and 15,000 blind persons with corneal defects, in the United States, may have an opportunity to see again through the activities of The Eye Bank. The operation substituting a healthy cornea for a damaged one can restore sight in only one type of blindness—that caused solely by opacity of the cornea when the rest of the eye and optic nerve are normal.

"The purpose of The Eye Bank," Mrs. Breckinridge explained, "is to make available a supply of fresh or preserved corneal tissue wherever and whenever needed by hospitals and surgeons who are qualified to perform the corneal graft operation. We also plan to extend, through scholarships and fellowships, the knowledge and skill required to perform this delicate operation.

"One of our most important objectives will be to discover a method for preservation of the corneal tissue over a longer period of time than is now possible. At the present time, the corneal tissue taken from a living or dead person may be stored for only three days before it is transplanted. Corneas obtained from a dead person must be removed within a few hours after death. In New York State, however, it is necessary to have the legal consent of the next of kin for a post-mortem removal of an eye, even though the deceased left written instructions for the use of his eyes in this way."

The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness and other public health and medical agencies are co-operating with the project. The New York Chapter of the American Red Cross, through its Motor Corps Division, has taken the responsibility for transporting corneas between The Eye Bank and its affiliated hospitals.

PERSONALIA

After nearly 21 years' valuable work as Chairman of the Hastings Voluntary Association for the Blind, ALDERMAN MISS ANNIE LILE, J.P., has resigned, and at the Association's annual meeting last month COUNCILLOR CAPT. E. T. HYLAND, former Vice-Chairman, was appointed to succeed her. Miss Lile has been a

member of the Committee since the Association was founded in November, 1921.

* * *

MRS. G. H. SCHWIND has been appointed Hon. Secretary of the Kesteven Blind Society, in place of LADY WELBY, and communications should be sent to her at Dembleby House, Nr. Sleaford, Lincs.

AN HOUR FOR THE BLIND?

NOT long ago a correspondent in *The Daily Mirror* made the suggestion that the B.B.C. should have an Hour for the Blind, in the interests of many thousands of blind listeners. It would probably cater for about 70,000 British blind, for though the number of blind persons owning wireless sets is of course much smaller, the 70,000 would include school-children and those who may only listen occasionally.

The proposal is interesting, and the blind listener to whom it did not appeal could always, by the twiddling of a knob, get away from the specially devised programme to something more congenial; and in any case, he would for sixteen listening hours of the day out of seventeen be sharing his programme with the seeing.

A programme specially designed for the blind listener is not difficult to imagine. Part of it might cater specially for the needs of the blind school-child who has never seen, and just as the "For the Schools" has many interested adult listeners, so one might reasonably expect that a feature "For the Blind Schools" would have its appeal to the blind man or woman, and especially to the blind man or woman who has never seen, or who at least has no memory of sight. The teacher of blind children could be consulted on the form such a feature could take and the way it might supplement the already useful material presented to schools generally. Further, there are features in present programmes which to those who have been blind from early life can make little or no appeal—such as the talks on the visual arts, descriptions of football or cricket matches, and indeed any item in a programme where the "mind's eye" is required to play a predominant part.

It must be admitted, however, that such features are few, and even the description of a football match or a great picture has many interested blind listeners among those whose loss of sight is of comparatively recent onset, and who retain vivid memories of watching matches or visiting picture galleries. The radio is, at all times, an appeal to the ear, and not to the eye, and the blind listener is probably more acute and appreciative and critical than the seeing. Certainly the seeing listener who tunes in to plays on the wireless is often completely surprised when there is a brief pause, broken by the announcer's "You have been just listening to..." and realises that the drama which he imagined was working up to its climax is already over.

The most valid objection to a Blind Listener's Hour is that the blind man or woman is rightly distrustful of anything that tends towards segregation. The blind are "fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons... warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer" as the rest of us, and anything that appears to accentuate a difference is suspect; there is a difference, but it is a physical and not a mental one, and there is about the suggestion of a Blind Listener's Hour a faint suspicion of inferiority.

But the idea suggests another. If not "An Hour for the Blind," why not "An Hour by the Blind"? Since 1939, the Sydney Industrial Blind Institution has been on the air once a week; blind speakers, vocalists and instrumentalists have taken part in what is called The Glow-worm Session, and the results have been extremely encouraging. Besides affording weekly engagements to a number of talented blind people, many of the artists taking part have been brought before a wide public, and have been offered other engagements at dances, parties and concerts. Further, the session has been of value in showing the blind in out-lying districts what education and training can achieve, and has resulted in many letters from blind persons asking for the services of home teachers.

Could not something on these lines be tried over here, in order to show the listening public what the blind can do? In addition to blind instrumentalists and vocalists, blind men and women who, in the war effort, have worked side by side with the seeing, could come to the microphone and give interesting talks on "My Job"; there could be talks by blind men and women who have successfully entered the professions; the work of rehabilitation carried out in Homes of Recovery could be described by those who have themselves been rehabilitated; teachers could describe the work done in schools for the blind, and show how, given their opportunity, the blind boy or girl can reach the same standard as the seeing. In short, cannot the microphone be used to educate the listening public on the potentialities of the blind?

THE EDITOR.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A PARTIALLY SIGHTED JOURNALIST—II

By HENRY PAYNE

ONE never-to-be-forgotten day I crossed the border a few miles beyond Carlisle, and found myself at last in Scotland. Annan was the first town I struck, a quaint picturesque old town with small houses mostly white-washed but looking very pleasant and homely in the twilight. After a night in Annan, I travelled on to Dumfries, and from thence continued my journey towards Glasgow. After a few weeks in Glasgow I continued my journey, via Auchterarder to Perth the fair city. Here I passed the night in company with several other wanderers in the condemned cell in the old Penitentiary on the banks of the Spey. We were a merry crowd, and among our number were many old soldiers who, though they had proved their worth on many a battlefield in Egypt and South Africa, were doomed, by the unemployment which then prevailed throughout the country, to pass the eve of their lives wandering up and down the length and breadth of Great Britain in search of any odd jobs which afforded them the wherewithal to exist. One of the things that impressed me most during this long trek from London to Scotland, was the appalling, and in the light of subsequent events, the criminal wastage of man-power which existed everywhere in Great Britain at this particular time.

One day while peddling on the outskirts of Dundee, I contacted a schoolmaster to whom I was induced to show these literary efforts. He expressed himself as somewhat impressed and gave me a letter of introduction to a local editor, which I delivered a day or two later. The outcome of this introduction was that I received my first commission to write an article for publication. Being at that time very young and tremendously egotistical I naturally concluded that all my trials and tribulations were at an end, that fame and fortune were as good as in my grasp, but like many another conceited ass I soon discovered that I was a very long way off, indeed, from achieving my ambition or anything approaching to fame and fortune. As a matter of fact, my first article was a flop. The editor very patiently, and very kindly pointed out to me that I moralised too much and did not put enough

incident in my story. So I went away terribly disappointed but not by any means defeated. My second attempt was more successful, and I received my first payment for a literary contribution—the sum of 7/6d. in three whole half-crowns, which to me, at that period of my life represented great wealth. I stayed in Dundee quite a long time and wrote a great many articles, some of which were accepted, but the majority rejected. On more than one occasion I felt like wishing that I had never met that schoolmaster, for as a wandering pedlar, free to come and go as I chose with the length and breadth of Great Britain as my happy hunting ground, was as merry as the day was long; having no thought or care beyond the provision of the day and the improvement of my mind, by reading and the first-hand study of Nature in all her moods I was quite content with my lot. But this new life which had opened out before me represented something that I was not used to, a settling down to life on a conventional plane, with continuous worries and anxieties connected with finding fresh copy and turning it out just so for publication.

In a fit of spleen, I turned my back on Dundee and set off to tramp back again to London—a distance of over 400 miles. On this return journey I made more speed and arrived in London some three months later. *En route* I contributed many articles to local papers. True, the remuneration was not large, sometimes only half-a-crown for a full column, but it helped me to get over the journey from Dundee to London without experiencing the actual pinch of want. Arriving in London I secured a lodging in a side street off Russell Square and began to work in real earnest to win recognition by the Press. This period, which I have always regarded as my apprenticeship, was actually hard labour owing to my impaired vision. The writing was performed with my nose almost glued to the paper and there was the added difficulty of reading what I had written. I used to write far into the night and slept most of the day, and hawked my wares in person round Fleet Street. Being by nature very persistent, I eventually succeeded in gaining admittance to the awe-inspiring presence of more than one editorial magnate, and in this way got myself into print.

One notable success I achieved about this time, was the acceptance of an article by T.P.'s Weekly, a periodical now defunct, for which I was paid £2 15s., which I held to be something like success. After the publication of this article I had quite a run of luck and had many articles accepted by papers and periodicals of widely divergent views and interests. Among special assignments given to me by editors up and down Great Britain, were several long distance tramps through Great Britain and Ireland, the writing up of a large number of social and philanthropic institutions and divers industrial activities.

This work, being intensely interesting and engrossing, was very much to my liking and I might have continued it much longer had not what little sight I had begun to fail. Upon consulting a well-known oculist, he told me that if I wished to retain my remnant of sight I would have to give up definitely all idea of earning my living by my pen. Naturally, I did not take his advice, as I was by then heart and soul in this literary business for the sheer love of it, and when I could no longer see to write myself, my wife became my amanuensis and we continued together the work that was congenial to us both. Her untimely death, as the result of injuries received in an air-raid on January 11th, 1941, deprived me of my greatest support and a dear companion.

I have long been conscious that my wayward and erratic disposition, combined with my utter inability to settle down anywhere to anything, for any length of time, has in large measure contributed much towards my failure to make a complete success of life. But I am not whining over that and I am not apologising to anybody. If I had my life to live over again, I should, with some exceptions made imperative by the stern rule of experience, do exactly the same as before. As a tramp I was happy and I made the very best use of my ability to tramp. I made many good friends too, now alas gone the way of all flesh. Among them are such names as Anthony Hope Hawkins, G. K. Chesterton, Robert Blatchford, Glyn Philpot, and many others whom I used to meet often and talk with for hours on end.

My wanderings have also enabled me to see much of the beauty and grandeur of my native land, to meet all sorts and conditions of people and to learn, first-hand, how men and women feel and think in widely divergent situations and circumstances. Now in my old age and blindness I can no longer take long tramps into the country, but I still retain sufficient vitality and energy to take a walk each day through the City of London and the East End. For the rest, I have my memories of golden days spent on the moors, on the hills, and among the mountains of my beloved Britain.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor,

This Pity

SIR,—I am writing on behalf of two of my friends, who are Home Teachers, and myself, all working for Blind Welfare. We do so wish to thank Mr. F. Burville for his extremely sensible, well-balanced letter appearing in the April issue of THE NEW BEACON, in reply to other blind men who have complained about the treatment they have received from sighted folk.

Several of us in the same line meet every week-end as a rule, and articles and letters appearing in THE NEW BEACON and the *Teacher of the Blind* come in for discussion by us. I had said that if many more letters of complaint were published we should feel almost afraid to try and help, since the blind writing on how they were treated were so critical. Then Mr. Burville's letter was printed, putting things in a well-balanced way, and we were mighty glad! I think the letter should be published by the

N.I.B. in pamphlet form for the guidance of blind persons. Blind people complain of being treated differently and apart from other people, but I feel sure it is of their own making, because such a man as Mr. Burville obviously is "at one" with everybody—he goes half-way to meet the sighted, and the sighted join him. Many of the public just need a little guidance from the blind and soon learn that we are all a happy family if we let ourselves be so. I have some most human blind in my area whom it is a pleasure to serve in any manner, and their jolly ways are often a marvel to many of us working as Home Teachers and Visitors.

Yours, etc.,

FAIRPLAY.

To the Editor,

A Boot-Repairer's Experiences

SIR,—May I be permitted to make some observations on the very timely warning which was expressed so admirably by Mr. H. G. Jones in his article entitled "Disabled Shopkeepers"?

Two points which the writer made stick out a mile, and they cannot be too strongly stressed: first of all, use every available means of finding out the real worth of the business before parting with your cash, as, all too often, the seller's ideas on what the business is worth bear very little relationship to its real value; secondly, before undertaking to run any sort of business it is imperative to make sure, in your own mind, that you possess the necessary knowledge and ability which will be required to conduct successfully the type of business you contemplate buying. In giving us his experiences I feel that Mr. Jones has rendered an invaluable service, if only it is heeded by those whom it concerns. I myself was so impressed by the article that I decided with your permission, sir, to pass on an experience of my own. The experience which I shall now relate has one marked difference when compared to that related by Mr. Jones—his venture involved thousands of pounds, whereas mine cost me barely a hundred. Here, then, is my story.

After having received instruction for three-and-a-half years in the Boot Department of an Institution for the Blind, I managed to get a job at a boot-repairing establishment, where the man was already employing another lad, who had also been trained at the same place as myself. We knew each other quite well, and, at the time I was taken on, my friend had been working for about a year with my new employer; I shall always remember with gratitude that man, who dared to give me a start—but I shall also remember something else too; how he used to administer frequent doses of philanthropic medicine to us by reminding us how fortunate we were in being able to work for him, as there were not many men in the trade who would be bothered with lads like us. This was enough to give us an inferiority complex for the rest of our lives, but I am happy to state that it did nothing of the sort, owing to our youthful spirits, together with the knowledge that more work was being turned out for a wage of £2 per week each to two partially sighted lads than formerly when one sighted man used to get a wage of £4. 10s. per week. That little bit of information made us feel very grand chaps, I can assure you. I myself stayed at this place for about two years, gaining valuable experience during the whole time; but in the end I sacked myself, as my employer reacted violently to a suggestion of mine indicating that I reckoned I was worth a little more money. My experience during the following six months or so led me to two conclusions: first, that my former employer was not very far wide of the

mark when he used to remind us that there were not many men prepared to give a job to a youth who had been trained in a blind institution; and secondly, that the best thing I could do was to buy a business of my own while the cash was still in the bank.

I wanted that business quickly, and I had only got about £90 to spend. After having made a few enquiries, I was put in touch with a man who wanted to dispose of a "good little boot-repairing business" owing to ill health; he offered me the outfit for £95, but I told him that it wasn't worth it, and in any case, I hadn't got that much cash. Thus ended the first interview, but he asked me to call again. This I did, and after some parley, he agreed to sell for £65.

The stock was valued at the week-end, but I did not take over until the following Monday evening, when I was to turn up with the cash and get the key. As we were about to leave the shop, just as an afterthought I remarked: "What about the cash for the few sundries which you have sold to-day?" "Oh," said the man to whom I'd just parted with my £65, "you'll find 5s. in the counter drawer to cover that—Monday is rather a quiet day."

I turned up at the shop at eight o'clock the next morning, feeling full of beans, but that feeling did not last many minutes, as one of the first things I did was to go to the counter drawer to put in a little small change, and, of course, I expected to find that 5s. Even now, although it happened twenty-four years ago, I have the most vivid recollections of my feelings when I discovered that the till was empty. I was not a bit bothered about being done for the five bob, but I was deeply troubled as I reflected that any man who could do a thing like that would stop at nothing.

I had got plenty of work to get on with, so that did something towards enabling me to forget about the deception, but not for long. On my second day in the shop, a traveller called. He looked surprised when he saw another man behind the counter. "Where's the other fellow?" he asked, "I've got an account here for him, for all that stuff you've got on that shelf." "Have you, indeed?" I replied. "Well, all I can tell you is this, that I've bought the business off the fellow you are looking for, but I didn't buy his debts." So off he went.

Now we come to the first week-end. I had got through a nice lot of work during the week, so on the Saturday morning I smartened myself up, ready to receive the customers who I ex-

pected would all be calling for their repairs. But by about seven o'clock in the evening, the only customers who came for repairs were those who had brought the jobs to me during the week. No one ever did come to collect that heap of repairs which were in the place when I took over; they were just a lot of fake jobs, put there to prove to me what a wonderful lot of work was taken in each week.

I had been in the shop about ten days, when another traveller called and wanted the patching machine off me, as the other fellow was still supposed to be paying for it. But he didn't get the machine!

And so I could go on, but I can best sum it all up by saying that in no single instance was that business what it was represented to be. I did, however, manage to make a success of it, but how I was able to do so is outside the scope of these remarks.

Within twelve months I was offered another job, which I accepted. I sold the business—in about ten minutes, and ended up with the same amount of cash in the bank as I had when I first took the place. Of course, I had paid my

way all the time—just having myself to provide for.

That, then, is my story, for what it may be worth to any disabled man who is contemplating buying a business. Let me make two further observations: Don't be in too big a hurry to take the first business you come across; take time over your investigations—it will have been well spent. That's where I made my first big mistake—you remember the phrase I used earlier: "I wanted that business quickly"—and the man I bought from must have known that too. Never go to buy a business with the idea in your mind that the one you are after is the only one left. Finally, when you've bought the business, don't rely on your handicap to get you customers. There are all sorts of ways of getting customers, but there is, as a rule, only one way of keeping them, and that is by "delivering the goods." I can assure you that the keenest critics of my work were among those of my customers who really knew how little I could see to do the work.

Yours, etc.,

J. GITTINS.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Another Blind Mus. Bac.—Mr. John Robinson, Preston, a former pupil of the School for the Blind at Preston, is to be admitted at the July Congregations to the degree of Mus. Bac. in the University of Durham. After leaving the Preston School, Mr. Robinson proceeded to the Royal Normal College for the Blind, where he obtained the degrees of F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M. and A.R.C.M. Since graduating he has held appointments as organist and choirmaster at Ribbleson parish church and at St. Paul's, Preston, and is now wholly occupied with a large teaching connection in and around Preston.

A Blind Film Critic.—Mrs. Amelia Jones, of Six Bells, Abertillery, who is 62 years of age and has been blind since she was a month old, visits the local cinemas free of charge three or four times a week. Film criticism is her favourite hobby and the local film fans set a high value on her judgment.

"I enjoyed the pictures even when they were silent," she told the Film Critic of the local newspaper, "but that was because my friends explained to me the main features of the story ;

I imagined the rest. But the sound films give me complete enjoyment—at least, the best of them do. When they are really good I go to 'see' them twice."

Miss Jones's favourite films are the screen versions of books which she has read in Braille. They give her critical faculties full play.

"For example," she said, "I have read 'Wuthering Heights,' and I had imagined the characters. When the film was shown the actors and actresses brought the characters I had imagined to life for me. With 'Jane Eyre' it was different, and I was disappointed."

With one exception Miss Jones's favourite film stars are all men. The exception is Greer Garson, and the men, in her own order of merit, are Robert Donat, Arthur Askey, Ronald Colman and Mervyn Johns. The film that stands out in her memory is "Mr. Chips." When she visits the grocer's shop at the end of the street she is always consulted about the current film programmes by the assistants and customers. She is a critic who has never disappointed her own fans.

MOORFIELDS AND MOLESWORTH STREET

RATHER more than a century ago, a young Dublin doctor studied at Moorfields hospital, and was greatly impressed by what that hospital was doing for the sick poor of London suffering from eye diseases. He returned to Ireland inspired to put into practice what he had learned.

The young man was William Wilde, later to be well-known as oculist and aurist, editor of a medical journal and an antiquarian of repute; and to be more famous still as the father of Oscar Wilde.

He had only limited means, but was prepared to start his work of helping the Dublin poor in a quite modest way, and he looked round for inexpensive premises where he could give eye-treatment on the lines adopted at Moorfields.

Those who know the offices of the National Council for the Blind of Ireland at 11, Molesworth Street, may be interested to know that Wilde leased the stables belonging to number 11, and, after fitting them up at his own expense, he opened them as a provident dispensary. Here he treated patients suffering from cataract, trachoma (then, as now, a desperately serious problem in Ireland) and squint. One of the patients treated for squint by him was another man who was later to be famous as the father of Bernard Shaw.

So successful did the dispensary prove that before very long it was too small to accommodate the patients who sought Wilde's advice there, and he took over a small derelict hospital, St. Mark's, in a near-by street.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The Prices given are Net.

Dances.

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----|
| 19265 | Abreu, Z.—Tico-Tico, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. | 6d. |
| 19263 | Leslie, E., and Gilbert, J.—The Sun
Never Sets on My Dreams, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. | 6d. |
| 19264 | McHugh, J.—Wouldn't it be Nice? <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. | 6d. |
| 19266 | Rose, D.—Holiday for Strings .. | 6d. |

Anthem.

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----|
| 18577 | Stanford—Hymn (after the Song of
Peace), V.S. .. | 6d. |
|-------|---|-----|

BRAILLE BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and Blind Individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covers.

Fiction:

Heart of a Child, by Phyllis Bottome. The story, set in the Austrian Tirol just after the 1914-1918 war, of a Tirolese boy who gives himself the task of saving his dog from an unjust death. It is truly up to date, since it is upon the courage and staunchness of the young that the continuity of Freedom now depends. 1 vol. (18674). 7s. 3d. F71.

The Happy Return, by C. S. Forester. Captain Hornblower returns to fight thrilling sea-battles in American waters during the Napoleonic Wars. 3 vols. (18736-8). 6s. per vol. F184.

History:

Inside Latin America, by John Gunther. An explanation of the peoples and policies of every nation in Central and South America by a first-rate American journalist. 6 vols. (18975-80). 7s. 6d. per vol. F448.

APPARATUS.

The price of the undermentioned article is increased as from 22nd May:—

The Game of Lexicon. Cat. No. 9337. List price, 3s. Special price, 3s.

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1, and
5, St. John Street, Manchester, 3.

ADDITIONS.

- | | Vols. |
|--|-------|
| Fiction: | |
| Barnes-Grundy, Mabel. Mary Ann and Jane .. | 6 |
| Bell, Josephine. Alvina Foster .. | 5 |
| Best, Herbert. Twenty-fifth Hour .. | 4 |
| Brahms, Caryl, and Simon, S. J. J. "Don't, Mr. Disraeli" .. | 5 |
| Carpenter, Margaret. Experiment Perilous .. | 5 |
| Colver, Anne. Mr. Lincoln's Wife .. | 7 |
| Dare, Simon. And Baffle Day .. | 4 |
| Gregory, Jackson. I Must Ride Alone .. | 2 |
| Gregory, Jackson. Mad O'Hara of Wild River .. | 2 |
| Irwin, Margaret. Young Bess .. | 5 |
| Keverne, Richard. Lady in No. 4 .. | 5 |
| Moore, Beryl. Behold the Threaded Sails .. | 4 |
| Morley, Christopher. Kitty Foyle .. | 3 |
| Riley, W. Common Clay .. | 4 |
| Simenon, Georges. On the Danger Line .. | 4 |
| Stuart, Jesse. Trees of Heaven .. | 3 |
| Yates, Dornford. Eye for a Tooth .. | 4 |
| Religion: | |
| Lewis, C. S. Pilgrim's Regress .. | 4 |
| <i>Anthroposophy</i> | |
| Steiner, Rudolf. Knowledge of the Higher
Worlds and its Attainment .. | 2 |
| <i>Missions</i> | |
| Goodall, Norman. Pacific Pilgrimage .. | 2 |
| Theosophy: | |
| Hampton, Bishop. Transition .. | 2 |

Welfare of the Blind :	<i>Vols.</i>
Guide Dogs Leaflet (Pamphlet)	1
Liakhoff, Capt. N. (Editor). Forward, 1943-4 (Guide Dogs' Bulletin)	1
Fine Arts and Music:	
Elkin, Robert. Queen's Hall, 1893-1941	5
Useful Arts:	
<i>Agriculture</i>	
Stapleton, Sir R. G. Disraeli and the New Age	4
Street, A. G. Hitler's Whistle	5
<i>Medicine</i>	
Morrah, Dermot. British Red Cross	1
To Mothers and Fathers	2
Prose Literature:	
Smith, J. C. Study of Wordsworth	2
Essays:	
Huxley, Aldous. Proper Studies	3
History:	
Nicander, Nucius. Travels of Nicander Nucius of Corcyra: The Second Book	2
World War:	
Han Suyin. Destination Chungking	6
Ministry of Information. First to be Freed	2
Pudney, John. Who only England Know	2
Romulo, Carlos P. I Saw the Fall of the Philippines	4
Target, Germany (Panda)	1
Travel:	
Strode, Hudson. South by Thunderbird	4
Biography:	
Boreham, F. W. My Pilgrimage	3
Gordon, J. King (Editor). Postscript to Ad- venture	6
Hathaway, Katherine Butler. Little Locksmith	4
Roosevelt, Eleanor. My Days	
Stevens, T. P. Father Adderley	2

French (uncontracted) :	<i>Vols.</i>
Hartog, W. G. Voyage des Dupont ("Brush Up Your French")	2
Juvenile:	
Blyton, Enid. Five Go Adventuring Again	2
Miall, Agnes M. Schoolgirl Fugitives	3
Grade 1:	
Thompson, Flora. Candleford Green	4
Moon:	
Dickens, Charles. Great Expectations	12

SOUTHERN REGIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

An Exhibition of Handicrafts will be included in the programme of the Home Teachers' Refresher Course, which is to be held in London from July 16th to 20th, 1945.

The handicrafts are to be made by the unemployable blind. The purpose of the Exhibition is to show what can be made with available materials, to encourage resourcefulness in inventing new handicrafts and for the exchange of new ideas.

All Home Teachers are invited to send in exhibits before 14th July at the latest (enclosing their own name and address) to The Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, S.W.1.

N.B.—The following rules should be observed:—

- (1) Each article should be marked with the name, age and address of the maker.
- (2) It should be stated whether the maker is blind or partially blind.
- (3) The source of supply of the material should be given, if possible.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

SIGHTED FEMALE HOME TEACHER FOR BIRMINGHAM AREA. State age and experience. College of Teachers of the Blind Diploma and three recent testimonials required. Salary £180 to £250 according to experience, plus cost of living bonus. Apply Secretary, Blind Institution, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17.

NATIONAL DEAF-BLIND HELPERS' LEAGUE.
Holiday Home for the Deaf-Blind, Trinity Road,
Hoylake, Cheshire.

The Fellowship House Committee much regret that they are unable to accept any further applications for holiday accommodation, as the Home is still full with evacuees for whom Homes cannot be found.

NATIONAL DEAF-BLIND HELPERS' LEAGUE.
Holiday Home for the Deaf Blind, Trinity Road,
Hoylake, Cheshire.

Applications are invited for the position of Matron at above Home, accommodating 12 deaf-blind people. The position becomes vacant on the 1st September next, and the salary offered is £150 per annum. Further particulars may be had from the Hon. Secretary, to whom applications should be sent.

WANTED, kindly persons to look after three blind old ladies, one living in Sandhurst, and two in Newbury districts. Live in, rent free. Secretary, Berks County Blind Society, Town Hall Chambers, Reading.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All Home Teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.

ESSEX EDUCATION COMMITTEE.
Blind Persons Acts, 1920-1938.

Applications are invited for the appointment of a sighted Home Teacher for the Blind. Salary scale is £200, rising by annual increments of £12 10s. to £250 per annum, plus war bonus of 18s. 6d. per week.

Particulars of the post and form of application can be obtained from the Chief Education Officer, County Offices, Chelmsford, on receipt of a stamped addressed (foolscap) envelope.

This advertisement is published by permission of the Ministry of Labour and National Service, under the Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Order, 1943, who have agreed that women born in 1910 or earlier may apply.

INFORMATION OFFICER AND ASSISTANT EDITOR required by the National Institute for the Blind. University degree desirable, but not essential. Salary according to qualifications and experience, with prospects. Apply to Secretary-General, 224-6-8, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

HOME TEACHER (sighted) required, rural area. Commencing salary, if certificated, £156 per annum, plus war bonus. Apply, stating age, qualifications and experience, with testimonials, to the Secretary, Chester and District Blind Welfare Society, 13a, Lower Bridge Street, Chester, before 2nd July, 1945.

GUILD OF BLIND GARDENERS.

A very limited number of bursaries are available for training in horticulture as a career. Consideration will be given to applicants not over 18 years of age, and applications must be supported by the appropriate Local Society or Voluntary Agency. Apply Secretary, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

HOME TEACHERS' EXAMINATION, 1946. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

OLDBURY GRANGE TELEPHONY SCHOOL

Instructor (sighted) for telephony school, Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth, required. Ability to teach Braille and typing essential. Successful candidate will be trained in telephony for the purpose of instructing in this subject when proficient.

Salary £150 per annum, resident, rising by increments to £200 per annum. Apply for application form to Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

EAST SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL.

Blind Persons Acts, 1920-1938.

Applications are invited for the permanent post of female Home Teacher and Visitor of Blind Persons. Candidates must be sighted and not over the age of 35 years and must hold the Home Teacher's Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind. Applications from non-qualified Home Teachers will also be considered, but, if accepted, they will be required to qualify within two years of the date of their appointment. All candidates must have a knowledge of Braille and Moon types, the administration of the statutory provisions relating to blind persons, practical ability to teach Home Occupations. Knowledge of round knitting machine an advantage (not essential).

The post is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Salary for qualified Home Teacher, £200 per annum rising by annual increments of £10 to £250 per annum, plus war bonus at present £48 2s. per annum.

Candidates must be able to drive a car, travelling expenses being paid according to the County Council scale.

Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, should be addressed to the Clerk of the East Suffolk County Council, County Hall, Ipswich, and be received not later than 26th July, 1945.

CECIL OAKES,

Clerk of the County Council.

WANTED, Open Channel-Cutter for Shoe Repairing. Second hand. Apply Miss Armitage, National Council for the Blind, 11, Molesworth Street, Dublin.

THE HULL AND EAST RIDING INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND will shortly require the services of a Matron for their Women's Home, Beverley Road, Hull. Accommodation 24. Some nursing experience desirable. Salary £120 to £150 per annum, according to qualifications. Applications, with copies of three references, to be sent to Mrs. G. Robinson, J.P., "Fouracres," North Ferriby, East Yorks.

East London Home & School, Northumberland House, Warwick Road, London, E.5. It is hoped, if a large enough number of old pupils can attend, to arrange a Reunion of former scholars of the above school, probably in September, in the neighbourhood of the school. All who may be able to come are asked to notify Mr. Pettifer, 38, King Edward Road, Oxhey, Watford (Tel. Watford 2192) as soon as possible. Mr. Pettifer would also like to hear from any interested, but not able to attend, in order that he may pass on messages and news of former pupils to those at the Reunion.

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL.

Applications are invited for the post of Certificated (sighted) Home Teacher (Female). Salary £180 per annum, rising by annual increments of £15 to £280 per annum, plus war bonus at present £48 per annum. Previous experience will be considered in fixing commencing salary.

Candidates must be able to drive a car (which will be provided) or be willing to learn.

The post is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination and to reside in or near Chichester.

Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, with names and addresses of two references, should be addressed to the County Medical Officer, County Hall, Chichester, not later than 3rd July, 1945.

T. C. HAYWARD,

Clerk of the County Council.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BARNSELY.

BLIND WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

APPOINTMENT OF HOME VISITOR AND TEACHER.

Applications are invited for the post of **Certificated Sighted Female Home Visitor and Teacher** at a salary of £180 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £250 per annum, plus the prevailing cost of living bonus, which is at present £40 6s. od. per annum.

In fixing the commencing salary, regard will be had to the successful candidate's previous service as a Certificated Home Teacher with a Local Authority or agency for the Blind.

The appointment will be terminable by one month's notice on either side and will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937. The successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Applications stating age, whether married or single, qualifications and experience, together with copies of not more than two recent testimonials, should be sent to the Medical Officer of Health, Public Health Department, Town Hall, Barnsley, not later than the 2nd July, 1945.

Town Hall, Barnsley,
4.6.45.

A. E. GILFILLAN,
Town Clerk.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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LISTENING TO THE WORLD

By JOHN JARVIS.

IT is of course a truism to affirm that the magic of radio enables the ordinary listener, sitting in the quiet of his home on any winter's evening, to transport himself, at will, by the mere turning of a knob, to the sumptuous gaiety of La Scala in Milan, to the wit and sparkle of the Comédie Française, to the joyous enthusiasm of a meeting of Yugoslav partisans, or to the more familiar atmosphere, charged with warmth and intimacy, of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields in London. But of all those who possess receivers capable of supplying them with such delights, only the barest minority avail themselves of what is so freely and accessibly offered. That I am able to count myself among the number of the radio globe-trotters is due in no small measure to the encouragement in the ceaseless quest for new experiences and fresh fields of knowledge which was always forthcoming at Worcester College for the Blind throughout the late Headmaster's tenure of office, and which is still enabling students there to explore ever wider horizons.

It was at Worcester that I first became conscious that nation intended to speak ever more volubly unto nation by this new means. Moscow was the first in the field, and was already providing listeners in a dozen European countries with material in their own languages concerning every aspect of the Soviet effort, and this some years before Hitler's assumption of power in Germany. Since I was one of the keenest of the audience which these foreign voices were attempting to reach, and since I was convinced from the outset that they could be of great service to me, if only in assisting me in the study of modern languages, my favourite school subject, I determined to seek employment in the task of making known their utterances to all whom it might concern. Despite solemn warnings that massage, law and the Church were the only professions in which a blind person could be reasonably certain of making an adequate living, and that attempted entry into any other would involve the hazards of all pioneer ventures, it was a degree in modern languages which attracted me when the time came for me to move on to Oxford.

By the time I was ready for full-time work in my chosen profession, the voices had become more numerous and in some cases much more strident, for the Goebbels propaganda machine was active in most parts of the world, and from Bari its junior partner was sparing no words in its attempts to inflame the Arab world. No official action was taken, however, in the systematic recording and analysis of this rising torrent of speech, and until the outbreak of war I had to be content with the job of extracting two thousand or so of the more significant of these words for the

July 15th, 1945

benefit of the National Labour Party's "News Letter."

In the summer of 1939, however, the B.B.C. was commissioned by the Government with the task of listening much more widely and systematically, and reporting much more fully; and at the end of August of that year the B.B.C. Monitoring Service came into being. Thanks to an unsuccessful application for other work in the Corporation, my name was already on its files, and I was offered the opportunity of a test and an interview, in order that they might discover whether I were a suitable candidate for a place in the new service. The test consisted of the playing to me of recordings of two French news bulletins, of which one had originally been put out in the newly created European Service of the B.B.C. and the other picked up from Paris by the B.B.C. engineers. I had to write Braille notes while the bulletins were being read, and then to type as complete and accurate a version as possible of what I had heard. My experience with the "Foreign Voices" column of the "News Letter" was of very great value here, for the basic technique of monitoring was one which I had mastered in the seclusion of my own home, and it therefore held for me none of the terrors which made the test such a painful ordeal for a number of other applicants. The interview was also very easy going, and within a few days I was duly instructed to report for duty at one of the B.B.C. premises in the country, in which the Monitoring Service was housed from its inception until the spring of 1943.

At this point I feel bound to digress for a moment and to pay a very warm tribute to those who were responsible for the first appointments to the Monitoring Service. That men harassed by the responsibility of creating a service of which the operations were untried and whose ends were but ill-defined at this early stage, should have been prepared to take the by no means inconsiderable risk of engaging a totally blind person for new work in new surroundings, is in itself a striking testimony to the foresight and initiative of these pioneers.

For the first four months of the war my work consisted of listening to transmissions in French from all parts of the world and dictating the essentials to a typist, so that they could be circulated to all interested parties both within the B.B.C. and in the various government departments. I lost no time, however, in impressing upon the management that my interests were much wider than the output of a single language group, and in January, 1940, I was one of three members of the staff who were chosen to form a Special Listening Section of the

service. This was a reconnaissance team whose work consisted of a constant policing of the ether throughout the twenty-four hours, so that the arrival of new stations on the air and all changes in the wave lengths and programme layout of existing stations could be detected at the earliest moment, and all relevant information passed without delay to the appropriate people. As more and more voices added their contribution to the world cacophony, the section was steadily enlarged, and it now stands at exactly four times its original size.

At the end of 1942 I became supervisor of the section, and I was responsible throughout 1943 both for the operational side of its activities and also for the distribution of its findings. When these functions were later divided, it was to the operational aspect of the work that I once again devoted my full attention.

Work of this nature is peculiarly well suited to performance by a blind person. The principal qualification for it is the possession of a capacious and flexible memory. All my seeing colleagues agree that I enjoy a real advantage in being able to remember the order of stations as they appear on the various wave bands without reference to any list except at rare intervals. Constant patrolling of the ether since boyhood has made me as familiar, for example, with the fact that Moscow lives next door to Ankara, and that Belgrade lives next door to Paris, as is the milkman with the fact that Mrs. Smith lives next to Mrs. Jones or Mrs. Brown to Mrs. Robinson. If some new station suddenly plants itself between Moscow and Ankara on the dial or, as often happens, if it lands right on top of one of these, its presence can best be noted by one who has a full mental picture of what was audible before the appearance of the new arrival. Memory also helps in the recollection of the times at which each station regularly transmits news and talks, and makes it possible to appreciate at once any departure from the fixed time tables. Speedy identification of languages is another indispensable attribute of the good Special Listening Section monitor, and of course the attention which the blind normally pay to the inflection and intonation of voices can soon be directed into this channel, so that, without knowing a word (e.g., of Swedish or Bulgarian) he can soon accustom himself to recognising the sing-song quality of the former, or the forceful tones of the latter.

A combination of memory and language identification has led to some useful results. Thus when on one particular day I found a station broadcasting in the mid-day period on the Lublin wave length and identified the language as

Polish, I realised at once that Lublin must have come on the air for some special occasion, and immediately switched on the dictaphone recorder so that nothing should be lost. With my other hand I picked up a telephone and summoned a Polish colleague from another part of the building, and as soon as he had joined me and clapped on headphones he heard the announcement of the liberation of Warsaw. We beat all other news sources in this country by a substantial margin in the circulation of this information. Countless instances of the same kind could be quoted, which provide frequent reminders of the value of this work.

In my view, THE NEW BEACON would not be justified in carrying what I have written above if it were no more than a piece of straightforward autobiography. But we are living in what an official of the N.I.B. has aptly described as one of unparalleled significance for blind welfare. The provisions of the Disabled Persons Employment Act afford a unique opportunity not only for the further development of the already very promising results which have been achieved in the sphere of the employment of the blind in open industry, but also for the exploration of ever-widening vistas of useful occupation for the professional blind, and especially of those who like myself, feel that they are not destined either for Holy Orders, for legal practice or to become

physiotherapists. I was fortunate in that I received every encouragement, both from the N.I.B. and from the local education authority and the voluntary association for the blind in whose area I resided, so that no obstacle was placed in my way once I had decided to venture outside the comparatively limited scope of the well-tried professions.

No one, however, can honestly claim that all committees, in whose power it lies to assist blind persons in securing professional training and employment, have shown an equally intelligent and imaginative approach to this problem. If I had, by the mere accident of birthplace, found myself under the jurisdiction of one of these bodies, I might now have been compelled to adapt myself to the requirements of one of the three stock professions, for none of which I should have been adequately suited, or perhaps to abandon altogether any hope of developing a somewhat unusual interest and ability, and making use of it for the benefit of the community. Much can be done to further the interests of the professional blind at this juncture, but not until every authority responsible for their welfare is prepared to take risks in aiding those who evince desires as unorthodox as my schoolboy wish to earn my living by listening to the world by radio.

HOME NEWS

The Queen's Tribute to the Blind.—The Queen was present on 11th July at the eightieth anniversary celebrations of the Hepburn Starey Blind Aid Society, postponed from last year, and held at the Welsh Baptist Chapel, East-castle Street, W. It was Her Majesty's second visit, the previous one having been made when, as Duchess of York, she first became patron of the society in 1934, and she was piped to her seat by tartan-clad boys of the Scottish Corporation Orphanage.

The Queen told her audience how great was the pleasure it gave her to be with them, and how she rejoiced that they had found a new place to meet after the war had deprived them of Whitfield's Tabernacle, their old meeting house. "We who see a beautiful world, who see colour, form and light; also see much that the blind are spared; perhaps that is why you have so much to teach us of the spirit of tranquillity and inward joyousness. You who

are so brave, faced with great courage the bombing of London, and in those days I was always very proud to hear of your endurance and of your courage during those long years of cruel war."

During the proceedings the Queen presented a platinum and pearl brooch to Miss M. E. Ring, who first attended the meetings as guide to her blind father 64 years ago, and an umbrella to Mr. E. P. Coleman, who was born the year the society was founded and has been a regular attendant for the last 40 years. She also accepted a number of purses collected for the society's funds.

Mrs. Buckingham, a blind member who had given the vote of thanks on the Queen's previous visit, thanked her for coming again, and said it was the realisation of a great hope of the society's members. "We have the greatest lady in the land here among us to-day,"

she said. She hoped that one day the King would come to see them.

The Queen was received by Lady Gladstone president of the fund, and by Lady Arrol, and the officers and members of the committee were presented to her.

N.I.B. Helps Persian Blind School.—The National Institute for the Blind is making a grant of £300 per annum for three years, to the Church Missionary Society towards the cost of conducting the School for the Blind in Ispahan, Persia.

Court Grange Marathon Race.—A special feature of the Sports Day at Court Grange School for retarded blind children, held on 21st June, was a Marathon Race of approximately a mile round the village of Abbotskerswell, in which the blind children were followed by a member of the staff, but was not guided in any way. Three totally blind and four partially-sighted children competed, the winning times being 13 minutes 58 seconds for the former and 11 minutes 58 seconds for the latter, the totally blind winner thus being only 2 minutes behind the winner with partial sight. An exhibition match of Sporto, a specially devised ball game for two teams of blind children, aroused much interest in the large crowd of spectators.

The Scottish Blind.—The publication of a bulletin on Welfare of the Blind, six times a year, is being considered by the Scottish National Federation of the Blind.

Postal Regulations for the Channel Islands.—Postal facilities for articles for the blind are now available for despatches to the Channel Islands, the admissible articles being the same as those for Great Britain and Northern Ireland (i.e., books and papers impressed for the use of the blind, paper posted for the purpose of being so impressed, metal plates impressed for the use of the blind, relief maps, Braille frames, pencil writing frames, Arithmetic frames, Braillette boards, playing cards). The weight limit is 15 lb.

Postal Regulations for Luxembourg.—Despatches of Braille literature are now permitted to Luxembourg at blind literature rates up to the normal weight limit of 7 kilogrammes (15 lbs.). Despatches will require to be censored by the National Institute for the Blind and forwarded under its censorship permit exactly in the same way as despatches for France and Belgium.

Thomasson Memorial School for the Blind, Bolton.—In a report in the *Bolton Journal and Guardian* it is stated that the Special Services Sub-Committee of the Bolton Education Com-

mittee has been considering the future of the Thomasson Memorial School, and a plan for re-organisation in three stages has been prepared. In the first stage, to be put into operation in September of this year, it is proposed that the Thomasson Memorial School shall, as a junior school, receive the "under-sevens" from Preston and Henshaw's as well as juniors who cannot be accommodated at Liverpool, and retain its own juniors. Partially-sighted children who are residents are to be transferred to Preston, and senior blind children to Henshaw's. Under the intermediate stage of the plan—in a year or two—Liverpool School for the Blind will take juniors from Bolton, Burnley and Oldham, whose schools for the blind will close; and in the final stage—six or seven years hence—it is planned that there shall be a residential school at Preston for children of seriously defective sight, a junior mixed school at Liverpool, a senior mixed school at Manchester, a nursery school for the "under sevens" from the north-west and north, and a school for retarded children.

Evacuated Schools and Institutions Return.—Under this heading we propose each month to inform readers of THE NEW BEACON of organisations for the blind which are returning to their original premises:—

East Anglian School for the Blind, now at Aberpergwm House, Glyn, Neath, Glam., hopes to return to Gorleston-on-Sea in September.

Bristol Royal School of Industry for the Blind, now at Templecombe House, Templecombe, hopes to return to Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, shortly.

Jubilee Home for Aged and Infirm Blind, Southampton Road, Wymering, Portsmouth, has been re-opened.

A WISH

By PEGGY VERNALL

(who is blind)

JUNE, rose-lipped and daisy-eyed,
Wilt thou not pause and stay?
Fair queen of dreams, and summer's bride,
May we not share thy glowing pride,
And see thy warm array?

Thy beauteous syringa gown,
Sun-scented, white and frail,
Thy hair as soft as thistledown,
Bearing a brilliant sunbeam crown,
And misty morning veil.

What flowers for thy bridal day,
O happy, dreaming June?
Lily and clove, and red rose gay—
But summer waits—thou must not stay.
Alas, thou goest too soon!

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

This Pity

SIR,—This increasingly vocative craze of a tiny blind minority in petulantly cavilling against the pitying gentleness bestowed on us by kindly, sighted mankind, must be causing the better-mannered blind majority to flush with shame and anger. Because of the embarrassing vicissitudes from which, even the most cleverly normalised of us are daily rescued through the promptings of *This Pity*, the blind as a class are morally bound to practise constantly and sincerely the divine virtue of courtesy.

Mr. F. Burville and "Fair Play" merit the gratitude of the general run of us for their letters in the April and June issues of THE NEW BEACON deprecating this rude and unrepresentative propaganda. We are one with Mr. Burville in urging such hypercriticals to try and be better mixers by thinking more of the other fellow's feelings and less of their own.

However much we may all dislike it, we cannot escape from *This Pity* normal humanity feels towards us. Ages and ages of civilisation, especially those since it was personified in the New Testament, have fostered in the souls of men compassion for all who suffer through pain or deprivation. Its expression has infinite individuality and cannot be standardised. God grant that we blind folk continue to be blest in full measure with *This Pity* for all in need, even though, like the rest of men, we may not be refinedly expert in manifesting it.

Yours etc.,

JOHN NOLAN.

To the Editor.

The Education of the Blind.

SIR,—Mr. Heggie's reference to me in his letter in the May issue of THE NEW BEACON compels me, by its distortion of my words, to take up my defence, however slight the chances of my being understood—slight they undoubtedly appear, for Mr. Wilson's article, "I Will Be Candid," seemed to me sufficiently unambiguous, yet Mr. Heggie apparently fancies that "all teachers come under Mr. Wilson's condemnation." There is, in my opinion, nothing to suggest either this or any other of Mr. Heggie's suppositions.

"It is curious that Miss Whitehead does not think her own family should share the responsibility if she suffered from immaturity when she left school." I did not say that I "suffered

from immaturity"; such an expression never entered my head. The quotation, given accurately in Mr. Wilson's article, runs:—"My own school, the Royal Normal College, had certainly none of the salient defects of the institution for the blind; yet, after a year at the University, I was told on all hands what a tremendous development had taken place in me, and I knew that what I was told was true."

It happens that this development was noticeably lacking in those of my own age who remained behind, even though they attended outside courses. This observation was made by unbiased witnesses, and by witnesses who were more likely to be prejudiced in favour of my contemporaries who had remained at the College. I am therefore left with the alternative: either the development was due to the renewed contact with my family and through my family with seeing people, or it was due to some inherent superiority in myself. The latter theory I reject absolutely, although it would also point to parental responsibility. I certainly attribute my having found my feet in the larger world with such comparative ease and swiftness to the free contact with seeing people which my early training in the family had given me.

I think that the apparent disparity between Mr. Heggie's and Mr. Wilson's experience of blind persons is due to the fact that "normality" does not mean quite the same thing to them both. I am inclined to Mr. Wilson's view of the case, but in justice to Mr. Heggie I must acknowledge that several of my own normal blind friends are past pupils of Craigmillar. Normality, however, means two rather different things. There are a good many blind people who are normal in the sense that they display no distinctively blind habits; there is a much smaller proportion who are normal in what I take to be Mr. Wilson's sense: they are quite as much at home in the company of the seeing as of the blind, they choose their friends among people with the same interests as themselves, irrespective of considerations of sight, and their friends frequently forget that they are blind. This is the standard which I set myself; nothing less satisfies me. There are blind people of whose blindness I am as uncomfortably aware as I was of the bricks which, until recently, blocked the windows of our dining-room. Yet these people are not, in Mr. Heggie's sense, "abnormal"; they are simply "blind."

Often, I think, the cause of this is their institution background; sometimes I am afraid it is bad teaching; and I think that Mr. Heggie might profitably reflect that progress is not, after all, inevitable. Surely the events of the past six years have proved that beyond dispute. No one will deny that some children develop bad habits *before* they come to school; but when I was a little girl, a day-pupil at an institution for the blind, I used to see the children picking up the institution's habits *after* they came. "How long," I would ask myself of a newcomer, "will it be before she takes it on?" Almost invariably the institution's habits grew—its linguistic oddities, for instance, a particular to which I was peculiarly sensitive. Admittedly I never took on the stamp myself, but I was a day-pupil, and the price I paid was that I remained an outsider for all the eight unhappy years I spent in that institution. The other children would come up, feel one slowly and deliberately all over, then say "Who's this?" To them it was quite normal; to me it was a torment. I suppose it was my contact with normal people whereby I knew that this sort of thing was simply not done which prevented me from adopting the practice myself and rendered me so uncomfortable under it.

"We cannot teach normality except by encouraging the blind to mix with the seeing," I remarked in the letter from which Mr. Wilson quotes. "Institutions for the blind," says Mr. Heggie, "cannot be held responsible for the failure to correct certain unfortunate mannerisms that some blind people develop before coming to school. The *only method* of overcoming these peculiarities according to *those best qualified to offer advice* is the constant vigilance of the teacher." This, in my view, serves to reinforce Mr. Wilson's plea for better qualified teachers, for "those best qualified to offer advice" appear to be sadly ignorant of modern educational theory and practice according to which the positive is vastly more important than the negative in education and "thou shalt" must precede "thou shalt not." Constant vigilance is necessary, of course, but one might as well try to cultivate a garden simply by cutting off the tops of the weeds. It is lost labour for a teacher to correct a child for "unfortunate mannerisms" if the child simply does not know what normality means and has no desire to achieve it. For the sake of peace he will probably give way during classtime, but the mannerisms will still be there, and in the holidays will flourish unimpaired. For upwards of a year I had the privilege of doing part-time teaching at a day school for the hard-of-hearing,

an experience which I found very valuable and interesting. The children had a habit of saying "eh?" every time they did not hear a question. Naturally I corrected this, and slowly "pardon" began to take the place of "eh," but I noticed that children who would say "pardon" when alone with me reverted to "eh" when among their fellows. One day, in response to a persistent "eh," I exclaimed: "Oh, Gloria, who says 'eh'?" "A sheep, Miss!" Gloria answered with conviction. We all laughed, and I knew that my battle was won. Gloria herself had struck at the very root of the habit; "eh" was an expression proper to sheep, not to normal human beings; the idea was hers—not mine. I wonder whether the immobility of many blind people is not in part a result of the view that all that is necessary to achieve normality is the elimination of "unfortunate mannerisms." So often has the child been corrected or heard others corrected for distinctively blind gestures that he tends to solve the problem by avoiding all gesture. Something, I think, could be done to counteract this tendency if more attention were paid to dramatic work—not that the blind will ever become professional actors, but the acting of plays might be a good method of teaching the institution-bred child such things as to turn his head in the direction of the person he is addressing, and to make some use of gesture and facial expression in his contact with his seeing fellows. I do not quite grasp Mr. Heggie's point in connection with the formation of companies of Guides and Scouts. Excellent as these organisations are, they will not, of themselves, be sufficient to counteract all the effects of segregation, and produce normality. I would suggest that all seeing teachers of the blind should come to the work with some training; they should hold at least the Teachers' Certificate with an additional qualification for the teaching of the blind. Knowledge of Braille is not in itself sufficient to justify the increment. This additional training could, I think, most profitably be given by a blind person with direct experience of the problems involved in the education of the blind and with a good qualification in the history, theory, and practice of education generally.

I have, in what I have written on the education of the blind, defended the rights of the family because I consider their preservation to be fundamental in a just social order. I have defended them because in much that is written to-day I see a mischievous tendency to attribute everything that is good to the institution and everything that is bad to the parent, a view

which violates both commonsense and experience. So far has this ramp gone that "incredible as it may appear" on the completion of my own academic career it was claimed by a certain institution, publicly, in the Press, that I owed everything to that institution at which, incidentally, I never happened even to have been a pupil. What is truth, when there is question of an advertisement? I do not believe either the parent or the teacher to be infallible, but I hold that the function proper to the former cannot be usurped by the latter without loss to the individual.

Institution life may be an unfortunate necessity for most blind children, but it is at its best only a second best; yet, like Mr. Wilson, I

believe that much could be done to mitigate its worst evils if only those in charge would look the facts in the face instead of hypnotising themselves into believing what they constantly reiterate, presumably for the benefit of subscribers—that all is for the best in the best of all possible institutions. For my own part, I believe my family and the contacts I made through it to have shared in the responsibility for my having become, after long struggles chiefly against the blind person's gravest handicap—prejudice, what the misguided headmaster of Mr. Wilson's article would be pleased to term "a freak."

Yours, etc.,

ELIZABETH W. WHITEHEAD.

EMPLOYMENT NOTES

The Blind in the Motor Industry.—The Motor Industry appears to offer considerable scope for the employment of the blind in peace-time. As previously reported, Messrs. Dennis Bros., of Guildford, reinstated twelve months ago one of their employees who had lost his sight, and he has made excellent progress working in their viewing room on short-run inspection. Messrs. Commer Cars, Ltd., of Luton, recently engaged a totally blind boy on production work, and within a fortnight he had mastered the operation of three of their simpler machines, carrying out threading and screw-slotting operations. He has been up-graded to operate the heavier type of machine, normally employing male labour, and the firm are delighted with his progress. Messrs. D. Napier & Sons, of Acton, have successfully employed blind workers on turret capstan operations of the heavy lathe order, normally carried out by men in their factory, with extremely satisfactory results in output, exceeding that of the sighted worker. This firm's production centre is moving to Liverpool, but as a result of the experience gained by these workers, other firms in the area have already expressed interest in the possibility of employing them.

The Careful Selection of Jobs.—Judging by current evidence, the wisdom of carefully selecting, during the war, jobs for the blind in industries which have a peace-time potential becomes clearer every day. Opportunities for the continued placement of the blind are not only still available, but the opportunity of work in sighted industry is yet in its infancy. The only way in which we can now fail is to lose the opportunity of holding fast to that which we

have gained, and exploiting the position to the fullest possible extent.

Comb Making by the Blind.—The Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind is now making an interesting experiment in the employment of the blind in plastic moulding. A machine has been installed which is at present making combs by means of injection moulding. It is operated by compressed air, and of a capacity suitable for making articles of the size of two 5-inch hair combs or two spectacle frames, etc. The dies are closed by hand, and movement of the air control lever in its first position operates an air locking cylinder which gives locking pressure to the dies. A further movement of the lever admits air to the cylinder operating the injection plunger, thus forcing the material through the heating cylinder into the dies. The reverse movement returns the plunger and unlocks the dies, enabling the machine to be opened and the mouldings ejected. Heating is by electricity controlled by a thermostat. Material used is thermoplastic, such as cellulose-acetate, etc., and has the advantage that scrap can be remoulded. At present the Institution is producing attractive combs in various shades of colour, which are, of course, selling as fast as they can be produced.

The machine is operated by a blind man, with two blind women polishing and packing. Polishing applies to one end of the comb which is a little rough as it leaves the die. The output of the machine is considerable, and in order to keep it fully employed, orders for large quantities of the article produced are necessary. Although the demand is at present greater than the supply, this state of affairs cannot continue, and in due course competition must be met in selling this product, as in other lines handled at Birmingham.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Braille and Talking Book Reading : A Comparative Study.

Will the Talking Book supplant Braille as the main reading medium of the blind? Is the material presented by the Talking Book assimilated as satisfactorily as that presented through the sensitive fingers of the Brailist? These are the kinds of questions which educationists of the blind are asking, and Dr. Lowenfeld, Director of Educational Research, American Foundation for the Blind, in his monograph *Braille and Talking Book Reading: A Comparative Study* seeks (for the first time, so far as we are aware) to find a reasoned answer. He was faced with two problems: How do Braille and the Talking Book compare in relation to speed and comprehension? Which form of "reading" does the blind child prefer? Two series of experiments were carried out. In the first series, 260 children in the lower grades of twelve residential schools for the blind were given 24 tests, selected from McCall Crabb's *Standard Test Lessons in Reading*. Six test lessons were presented in each of the following:—

1. Braille reading.
2. Talking book reading.
3. Talking book reading with sound effects.
4. Talking book reading with dramatisation.

In the second series, 221 pupils of higher grades took part in twelve tests, six presented in Braille, and six in Talking Book "straight" reading. Three story-telling passages and three text-book passages were included in the Braille and in the Talking Book tests.

The conclusions reached were as follows:—

1. That on an average Braille reading is about one-third as fast as Talking Book reading (blind pupils read Braille as a rule from one-half to one-quarter as fast as seeing pupils read print).

2. The comprehension of straight Talking Book reading is markedly superior to that of Braille reading. Sound effects made little difference, but the Talking Book with dramatic effects needs further study before any deductions can be made. The backward children, as one would expect, found Talking Book presentation more helpful in comparison with Braille than those who were more intelligent; for the child conscious of the mechanical difficulties of reading cannot be expected to take great pleasure in the material read.

In Series 2, so far as story tests were concerned, there was little to choose between comprehension of Braille and of Talking Book material, but where text-book tests were made, comprehension scores in Braille reading were markedly superior to those in Talking Book reading.

The recommendations made as a result of the tests, so far as they related to Braille reading were that Grade 1½ (which now in American schools is taught between Grade 1 and Standard English Braille) might be eliminated, and that greater use should be made of the Talking Book in the lower grades, where something is needed to compensate for the slowness of Braille reading, and to widen the "informational background" of the children; that sound effects appear to give pleasure and to stimulate interest, and that they therefore might be more generally used; that because the Talking Book reading rate is considerably greater than that of Braille in the case of older pupils (except where informational material is concerned) it should be more widely used; and that recordings should be made of books directly correlated with subjects studied, so that classroom use of this medium should become more general.

The Blind of Eire.

"Can you Read?" is the arresting title of a leaflet recently issued by the National Council for the Blind of Ireland. It begins by setting out some of the ways in which the blind man or woman has to meet expenses which normally do not hamper the seeing, and goes on to give information about the blind in Eire, pointing out to its readers that a blind child may grow up completely illiterate because there is no compulsory education for the blind; that there is no secondary school for the blind of Eire, and no arrangements for semi-professional training; that blind workers must be residents in institutions, and that there are no training arrangements for the blind man or woman over 30. The facts are simply and arrestingly told, and the leaflet should do something to bring to the notice of the people of Eire, with their "great tradition of charity for the poor and compassion for the suffering" the work that lies before them, if their care of the blind is to be worthy of that tradition.

TAKING RISKS

ON another page of this issue of THE NEW BEACON Mr. Jarvis writes eloquently of the way in which he came to find a post in which he has proved himself very successful. Most schoolboys of enterprise and initiative dream dreams of the future, which are not as a rule too fantastic for realisation. But the blind schoolboy of sixteen is often only too conscious that *his* dreams may never be translated into reality, not because of lack of ability, but solely by reason of his physical handicap. Parents, schoolmasters, voluntary agency or local authority, and, in the end, a rather bitter and disappointed schoolboy, may decide to play for safety; the ambitious youngster either agrees to be trained in a craft for which he has small inclination and very limited capacity, or is prepared for a profession of which he can never be a shining ornament. Incidentally, one hopes that Mr. Jarvis's third alternative in what he calls "the three stock professions" (massage, law and the Church) is never really contemplated for any boy, except as a "call that will not be denied"; for the priest or minister who questions the burning urgency of his message must be of all men the most unhappy.

Mr. Jarvis points out how he owed his good fortune (modestly omitting reference to his own ability) to the vision of the late Mr. G. C. Brown, Headmaster of Worcester College; to living in an area where the Local Education Authority was freed from conventional theories as to what a blind boy can, or cannot do; and to the help of the voluntary agency and the National Institute for the Blind. It is rather a long list of "happy accidents," and one would like to feel sure that what Mr. Jarvis achieved shall in future be accessible to any blind boy of equal gifts.

There are at least two promising signs of the times, one of which the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act he mentions. Further, the very fact that in the past five years blind people have rubbed shoulders day by day with seeing colleagues in workshop or factory must have given the seeing a far greater understanding of the normality of the blind. For never before have thousands of seeing men and women come into friendly contact with blind persons of their own age, outlook and general social background; and this must have its influence on schemes for Blind Welfare in the coming years. For it should rid the man in the street of sentimentality and substitute for it the common-sense recognition of blindness as a physical handicap, which, as such, should be compensated.

This brings us to the second of the promising signs of the times—the very wide recognition of the need of a Handicap Pension. At the time of writing, the result of the Election is still unknown; but whatever Government is returned, Social Security has its place in the programme of all three parties, and it is reasonably hoped that the handicap allowance for the blind may form part of any scheme adopted.

With such an allowance, modest though it might be, the young blind person might feel emboldened to take the risks involved in training for the career which was his ambition. "Safety First" must always be a rather uninspiring motto for the banner of a Youth Movement, and it could be replaced with something less drab.

Educationists talk a good deal about the emotional crisis apt to darken the life of the blind adolescent when he realises, after a care-free childhood in an enlightened and progressive school, that the road ahead is very narrowly circumscribed; and if the provision of a handicap allowance meant widening of horizons it would be money well spent.

Mr. Jarvis's article shows what a young blind man of enterprise can do even to-day; and a future that will hold the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act and the experience, gained in the war years, of placement in ordinary industry, and may also hold the handicap allowance, is one of encouragement for blind boys. Is there equal cause for optimism about the future for blind girls desiring a profession? They form half of the sightless population, and because their chances of married life are smaller than those of blind boys, their claim to a congenial career is certainly no less insistent. Their educational opportunities are equal. One is less sure if their professional opportunities are also equal—for the blind woman administrator is as yet unknown, and no blind woman has qualified in law.

THE EDITOR.

AGNES MELCHIOR: A PIONEER

We are indebted for information of Miss Melchior's work to Mr. W. P. Merrick and Mr. Thilander, the well-known blind Swedish Esperantist.

AGNES MELCHIOR died in February of this year of cancer of the throat, and those who care for the welfare of the blind in the northern European countries have lost one of their staunchest friends. Three things interested her above all—the education of the blind child, especially the young blind child, the care of blind women, and Esperanto. When she visited England about twenty years ago, and spent some six weeks as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Merrick, she could speak no English and but halting German, so all their conversation (“and,” writes Mr. Merrick, “it never ceased”) had to be in Esperanto.

Miss Melchior was the sister of a famous opera singer, who delighted Covent Garden audiences each year in Wagnerian roles. She was blind, but “a most exuberant personage and full of fun and go,” and about twenty-five years ago she succeeded in interesting a rich friend in the welfare of young blind children. He built a Home for them at Ballerup in Denmark, where Miss Melchior was installed as matron, and she watched over its welfare from that day until her last illness, through successive changes of *locale* from Ballerup to Sorgenfrivej and then to Kalundberg, where the nursery-school forms part of a larger institution for the blind.

She believed in teaching little children in the “play-way,” and those who had the privilege

of being present at any of her play-lessons never forgot the experience, and the way in which, amid fun and laughter, strangely pertinent enquiries from eagerly interested little children were satisfactorily answered in a way far removed from the “Don’t ask silly questions, dear” of a less imaginative adult. One day some children with a little sight wanted to know why an aeroplane got smaller and smaller as it rose higher and higher in the air. They had a picture book with successive pictures, showing it first on the ground, then a few feet up in the air, then higher still and finally as a mere speck on the horizon. Quickly, Agnes Melchior explained what the blind child cannot understand in terms of sight by making use of terms of hearing. She reminded the children of the Boy Scouts who had marched by the school, led by their bands, and of the music, at first strong and clear, which had grown fainter and fainter on the air, until at last it had died away. So it was with the soaring plane.

She was a member of many Committees dealing with the welfare of the blind, but for her the need of the individual was never overlooked among a welter of agenda and resolutions. As an Esperantist, she led the movement among the Danish blind, and “had friends all over the world.” It seems sad that she did not live to see peace restored and her country freed.

THE MERRICK MEMORIAL CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY

By R. W. BONHAM (Editor, “Braille Chess Magazine”).

THE late F. H. Merrick has left behind him many friends among blind chess players. For upwards of forty years

Mr. Merrick worked hard to introduce the game to the blind. He taught several to play entirely by correspondence, a long and tedious business. He it was who founded the Braille Chess Club whose aim it was not only to provide competition among the blind, but to get published for them a good library of chess literature. Mr. Merrick compiled and presented the pamphlets “First Steps in Chess” and “Chess Shorthand,” the latter being his own invention. He also designed the Merrick Chess set which we blind chess players have found such a boon. As Editor of the Chess Supplement to *Progress*, Mr. Merrick gave himself the opportunity of providing instruction and entertainment on a regular monthly basis, and

although this supplement has now been displaced by *The Braille Chess Magazine*, a periodical entirely devoted to the game, it can be claimed with justice that the publication of this latter periodical was due to the demand set up by the readers of the column in *Progress* and to the supporters of the Club which Mr. Merrick founded so many years ago.

In view of all this it can well be understood that Mr. Merrick left behind him a large circle of friends whose great wish it was that his name should be kept ever fresh in their minds. A subscription fund was therefore opened and with the proceeds a handsome silver cup has been purchased. This cup is to bear the name of the “Merrick Memorial Championship Trophy” and is to be awarded annually in a chess problem solving contest. All blind chess players throughout the world, without distinction, are eligible

to participate in this contest and the competitor gaining the biggest number of points in any one year will become the holder of the trophy for the following year, and be regarded as the champion solver of the year, his name being inscribed on the trophy. The National Institute for the Blind has generously undertaken the custody of the trophy and will defray all future expenses in connection with it. We can therefore rest assured that the trophy stands on a sound and enduring footing and that for many years to come it will serve to bring before the notice of all blind chess players the name of one whose tireless devotion and unstinting service has well earned him the name of "Pioneer" in chess for the blind.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Degrees for Three Worcester Old Boys.—Three past pupils of Worcester College for the Blind have recently gained degrees.

Mr. Edward Thorogood Keep, of Aberdare, has been awarded a B.D. degree, with first-class honours, at the Swansea University College, to where he proceeded from Worcester College four years ago, under the auspices of Carmarthen Presbyterian College.

Mr. Peter Jarvis, son of Counc. and Mrs. H. J. Jarvis, of Beeston, Nottingham, educated at Worcester College and Balliol College, Oxford, has obtained a B.A. degree, second class, in the Honours School of Jurisprudence at the University of Oxford. He is shortly to be articled to a firm of Nottingham solicitors.

Mr. W. J. Stafford, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, educated at Worcester College and St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, has also been awarded a B.A. degree, second class, in the Honours School of Jurisprudence at the University of Oxford.

Blind Organist's Long Service.—Last month a cheque for £32, the proceeds of a collection, was presented to Mr. J. F. Crabtree, blind organist at Holy Trinity Church, Chesterfield. After 47 years' service as organist at this church, he is now retiring.

Two Successful Young Pianists.—Two young blind pianists, pupils of the Yorkshire School for the Blind, each gained honours at the recent examination of Trinity College, London. In the junior division Walter Lawrence gained 83 per cent. marks, and in advanced preparatory Ray Sprince 94 per cent. In doing so she achieved the somewhat unusual feat of gaining full marks for both set pieces.

Royal Normal College Successes.—The following recent examination successes are announced by the Royal Normal College for the Blind. G.S. denotes Gardner Scholar.

ASSOCIATED BOARD OF THE ROYAL SCHOOLS OF MUSIC, LONDON.

Grade II	—Piano—	Gordon Almond (Distinction), William Douglas (Credit).
Grade III	"	Doreen Courtis, Pauline Davis (Credit), Sheila Wickens.
Grade IV	"	Ann Blades, Harry Williams, Alexander Tillier (Credit).
Grade V	"	James Hughes (Distinction), John Wells (Credit), George French (G.S.).
Grade VI	"	Harvey Morris (G.S.) (Credit), Brian Rogers (Credit), Irvine Swift (Distinction), Mildred Riggs (Credit).
Grade VIII	"	Audrey Frood (G.S.), Dorothy Rooke (G.S.).

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS.

Shorthand—80 words per minute.

George Bull, Joan Green (G.S.), Dorothy Jones (G.S.), Geoffrey Langstone, Stanley Palmer (G.S.), Arthur Roach (G.S.), Dorothy Rooke (G.S.), Joan Taylor (G.S.), Eunice Woodget (G.S.).

100 words per minute.

Audrey Frood (G.S.), Evelyn Hardiman, Mary Lathbury (G.S.), Ronald Maskell, Joan McCreedy (G.S.), Golda Stockwell (G.S.), Colin Wells (G.S.).

120 words per minute.

Norman Green (G.S.), Kenneth Wycherley (G.S.).

Typewriting—Stage I.

Aubrey Maden (G.S.), Derek Miller, Mary Rance (G.S.), Michael Reordan, Arthur Roach (G.S.), Dorothy Rooke (G.S.), Davis Schwartz. (All Credits.)

Typewriting—Stage II.

First Class: George Bull, Audrey Frood (G.S.), Basil Frost (G.S.), Mary Lathbury (G.S.), Joan McCreedy (G.S.), Peter Nason (G.S.), Stanley Palmer (G.S.), Golda Stockwell (G.S.). Second Class: Joan Green (G.S.), June Hawkins (G.S.), Irene Stansbury, Charles Taylor.

Typewriting—Stage III.

Joan Fielding (G.S.), Norman Green (G.S.), Evelyn Hardiman, Ronald Maskell, Aubrey Matthews (G.S.), Colin Wells (G.S.), Kenneth Wycherley (G.S.). (All First Class.)

Shorthand-Typist's Certificate.

Joan Fielding (G.S.), Norman Green (G.S.), Ronald Maskell, Aubrey Matthews (G.S.), Kenneth Wycherley (G.S.).

COLLEGE OF TEACHERS OF THE BLIND.

Pianoforte Tuning Diploma.

Geoffrey Benford (G.S.), Vyvyan Boocock, Cyril Woolgar (G.S.).

ROYAL NORMAL COLLEGE.

Pianoforte Tuning Certificate.

Geoffrey Benford (G.S.), Vyvyan Boocock.

Award to a St. Dunstaner.—In the Birthday Honours the B.E.M. was awarded to G. W. Killingbeck, Head Instructor at St. Dunstan's Hospital Unit at Stoke Mandeville. He is doubly handicapped, having lost his left arm as well as his sight in Italy in 1918. He is typical of the many St. Dunstaners of the last war who are now acting as instructors to men blinded in this war and affording them a magnificent

example by their skill, patience and fine personal inspiration.

Blind American Worker for the Blind Honoured.—English friends of Dr. Robert Irwin, the blind Executive Director of the American Foundation for the Blind, will learn with pleasure of the honour recently conferred upon him. He has been unanimously selected by the Alumni Association of the University of Washington Selection Board for the "Alumnus Summa Laude Dignatus" award for 1945. Previous holders of the award include a number of well-known scientists and medical men, and workers for the blind will be proud that Dr. Irwin is to take his place in so distinguished a company.

Blind Canadian Doctor of Laws.—At a special convocation of the University of Toronto last month, the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on Edwin Albert Baker, O.B.E., B.Sc., LL.D., Managing Director of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. Colonel Baker, who was blinded in the last war, has many friends in this country, which he has often visited.

PERSONALIA

Great regret will be felt by blind readers and by all those interested in work for the blind at the news that MISS PRINCE has resigned, for reasons of health, from her office as Secretary and Chief Librarian of the National Library for the Blind.

After working for some years as a Voluntary Transcriber and Teacher of Braille, Miss Prince joined the staff of the Library in 1915, as Assistant Secretary. She was appointed Secretary and Librarian in 1918, on the death of Miss Austin. During those years of service she has known great changes. In 1916, she moved with the Library to Westminster from the old cramped quarters in Queen's Road, Bayswater. She has seen the erection of the Great Smith Street premises, opened in 1927, and the re-building of the Tufton Street premises, opened in 1936. The number of readers has increased during her term of office from approximately 7,000 to over 16,000, and the stock of books available to readers has been greatly increased.

From all over the country come tributes to her unflinching enthusiasm and interest in the needs of blind readers, and she will also be greatly missed by those who worked with her.

* * *

The National Library for the Blind has appointed as successor to Miss Prince, Miss C.

K. GARVIE, a daughter of the late Principal Garvie, the well-known theological writer and scholar. Miss Garvie has worked with Miss Prince for a number of years in the Library, and will carry on the traditions of expansion and wholehearted service.

* * *

In the Birthday honours, the M.B.E. was awarded to MISS DOROTHY LLOYD, Head of the Braille Room at St. Dunstan's, Church Stretton. A member of the Red Cross, she is known to many St. Dunstaners who passed through the Braille Room during the last war and between the wars.

* * *

MRS. ALICE WINSTANLEY, of West Hartlepool, who is blind, celebrated her 100th birthday last month. Her birthday cake was studded with 100 sugared almonds.

* * *

MRS. KATHLEEN CHAMBERS has been elected Lord Mayor of Bradford to succeed the present Lord Mayor next November. She will be Bradford's first woman Lord Mayor. Mrs. Chambers is well known in Blind Welfare. For the past 15 years she has been a member of the Advisory Committee on Blind Welfare to the Ministry of Health; she is Chairman of the Northern Counties Association for the Blind and a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home

Southern Regional Association for the Blind

—The Report for 1943-4 is able to record some new developments, in spite of war conditions which made the work of a regional body with London headquarters specially difficult. A Conference was addressed by Mr. Tomlinson, M.P., in the summer of 1943, a very successful Refresher Course was arranged for home teachers, and a special week-end course at the Royal Eye Hospital, with the help of Prof. Sorsby. The Association has done useful work in connection with the provision of handicraft materials, the dearth of which is proving so great a handicap to home teachers, and it has also obtained equipment for Homes for the Blind. Through the deaths of Alderman Kel-land and Mrs. Montagu Brown, the Association has lost two of its most valued Committee

members, who were warmly interested in everything that could be done to improve the lot of the blind.

Home Teaching Society for the Blind, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—This Society cares for 1,062 blind persons in Newcastle and Gateshead, of whom nearly 900 are regarded as "unemployable." Among the more interesting activities encouraged among these is a Keep Fit Class and a Discussion Group (under the ægis of the Workers Educational Association) for which an energetic voluntary worker is responsible. The home teachers who here, as in other areas, rely greatly on the help of such voluntary workers, have suffered a serious loss during the year through the death of Mrs. Walker, after forty years of close association with the Society as its Hon. Lady Superintendent. Another forty-year-old link with the Society's work was severed with the death of Miss Adam, a member of its Council.

Like so many organisations for the Blind, the Newcastle Society is hoping to provide a Home for the Blind when the war is over, and meanwhile is giving thought to a proposal to provide a hostel, in co-operation with the local authority.

Foreign

Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind.—This Report is always a pleasure to read and to handle, and its illustrations in the issue for 1944 are even more attractive than usual. They consist of portraits of some of the great men who have been connected with the welfare of the blind or who have been blind themselves from a number of countries; Milton is chosen to represent the British blind, Johann Klein, the famous Director of the Institution for the Education of the Blind in Vienna, looks out with grave appraising eyes as an educationist of the first half of the 19th century.

Perkins now has 236 pupils, and admitted 42 in the past year, but discharged 44, thus suggesting that its numbers are now fairly constant. In the deaf-blind department of the school there are now nine children, including two who are hard of hearing. Unfortunately owing to lack of fully trained teachers some applications for admission had to be turned down. It is interesting to learn that one of the founders of Basic English is working on a system of Basic English for the deaf-blind, to be tried out at Perkins.

National Society for the Prevention of Blindness (New York). Once again the reader of this Society's Report is confronted with one of those attractive babies whose bright eyes are a reminder of what can be done to prevent infantile blindness. Here are a few of the main features of the year's record:—

1.—Participation in a drive to speed up war-time production by improved visual conditions in factories.

2.—Stress on the care of sight as part of the rehabilitation programme for the visually handicapped man returning from war service.

3.—Work in connection with the study of glaucoma.

4.—Help for teachers dealing with partially sighted children, study of children with severe visual handicaps and improved methods of vision testing.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the deaths of:—

Countess Baldwin for some years a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind (1925 to 1929) and always a warm friend of the blind. Earl Baldwin, Vice-President of Worcester College for the Blind, was accompanied by Lady Baldwin when, in 1939, he opened the new buildings.

N. Bishop Harman, M.B., F.R.C.S., LL.D., the well-known ophthalmic surgeon. He served in many public capacities, being for many years ophthalmic consultant to the L.C.C. Education Department, at one time Chairman of the Ophthalmic Committee of the British Medical Association, a member of the Departmental Committee on the Causes and Prevention of Blindness (1920) and of the Standing Committee on the Prevention of Blindness of the Union of Counties Associations for the Blind. Blindness in children specially concerned him, and he was the author of "The Eyes of Our Children" and "Preventable Blindness." He served the National Institute for many years as ophthalmologist to the Sunshine Home at East Grinstead and to Chorleywood College.

Miss Mary Maud Paget, youngest daughter of the late Sir James Paget, F.R.S., aged 84. Total blindness fell on her in middle life, but she made light of her disability, and with wide cultural interests, the capability of forming lasting friendships, and intense enthusiasm, she led as full and joyful a life after her blindness as before. She was a skilled musician and during the 1914-18 war organised concerts in hospitals and camps. These proved so successful that they were carried on under the title of "Music in Villages" for many years, financed by the Carnegie Trust. She was a pioneer in the work

of girls' clubs and to the end of her life kept in touch with her former club members.

In the issue of THE NEW BEACON dated 15th February, 1931, we reprinted a talk broadcast by Miss Paget, "On Being Blind." It was typical of her essentially healthy outlook on life. She insisted on the necessity to blind people of vigorous physical and mental exercise, and dwelt on the fact that one of the greatest advantages of the blind was their special power of imagination and inward vision. "I will boldly say," she said, "that no one understands the real refreshment of the country, as those who cannot see it... The darkness is composed of many lovely sounds. I never fully realised this before I was blind. Now I can hardly imagine a greater joy than that of listening to that wonderful living silence."

Miss M. E. Turner, Assistant Branch Secretary, Western Counties Branch of the National Institute for the Blind. She had been with Mr. King Cummings, Secretary of the Branch, for 23 years, and her personal self-sacrifice and devotion to the work was untiring and cannot be too highly estimated. Her sudden death deprives the Branch and the blind, for which it works, of a most capable and loyal friend.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices given are net.

Dances.

- 19268 Arlen, H.—Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive,
Song Fox-Trot 6d.
19267 Bath, H.—Theme from the "Cornish
Rhapsody" 6d.
19269 Martin, H., and Blane, R.—The Trolley
Song, Song Fox-Trot 6d.
19270 Sylva, Brown and Henderson.—Together,
Song-Waltz 6d.

BRAILLE BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and blind individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covers.

Anthologies:

Come Hither: A Collection of Rhymes and Poems for the Young of All Ages, made by Walter de la Mare. This has been described as a "wonder book," a "jewel," "one of the finest anthologies in the language," "the most compelling of anthologies," "the most delightful, the most magical of all the many collections of English verse." The actual poems, with Mr. de la Mare's "Story of this Book," occupy vols. 1 to 6, and his discussion of them, entitled "About and Roundabout," as enchanting as the poems themselves, occupies vols. 7 to 10. This arrangement permits a school, for instance, to use the anthology without the notes. 10 vols. (18965-18974). 6s. 6d. per vol. F636.

Fiction:

The Champlain Road, by Franklin Davey McDowell. A story of the Jesuit Missions in Canada, full of thrilling episodes, and awarded first prize in a Canadian competition for a historical novel of Canada. 5 vols. (18320-18324). 6s. 9d. per vol. F333.

Home Occupations Supplements, reprinted from "Progress," July, 1944—May, 1945. Pamphlet. 19331. 1s. E12.

MOON BOOKS.

(Grade 2 Moon)

- 4754 The Motive, by Ronald Knox. Price 9d.
4755 Vice Versa (Anstey), re-told as a Short Story by Winston Churchill. Price 1s.

APPARATUS.

The prices of the undermentioned articles are increased as under, as from the 12th June:—

- Shorthand Paper Guide (New Model), Cat. No. 9175.
List price, £1 3s. Special Price to blind individuals and Institutions, 15s. 6d.
Dominoes (seven blank to double nine), Cat. No. 9299.
List price, 11s. Special price to blind individuals and Institutions, 5s. 6d.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES.

STUDENTS' LIBRARY.

Philosophy:	Vols.
Carnap, Rudolf. The Unity of Science ..	1
Edwards, D. Miall. The Philosophy of Religion ..	4
Edwards, E. D. Confucius	2
Ewing, A. C. Idealism	9

Theology:

Davies, D. R. Down Peacock's Feathers: Studies in the Contemporary Significance of the General Confession	2
Fosdick, H. E. The Meaning of Prayer ..	3
Rawlinson, A. E. J. Christ in the Gospels ..	2

Political and Social:

Barker, Ernest. Britain and the British People ..	2
Carr, E. H. Nationalism and After	1
Edelman, Maurice. France: The Birth of the Fourth Republic	2
Lilienthal, D. E. T.V.A. (Tennessee Valley Authority): Democracy on the March ..	4
Nash, Walter. New Zealand: A Working Democracy	5
National Institute for the Blind (pub.). Five Ways of Employment for the Blind	1

Economics:

Shann, Edward. Economic History of Australia ..	7
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Law:

Blackburn, A. R., and George, E. F. The Elements of the Law of Tort. (1944) ..	6
Cheshire, G. C. The Modern Law of Real Property. (1944)	23

Science:

Wells, H. G. The Conquest of Time	1
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Literature:

Criticism

Bennett, Joan. Virginia Woolf: Her Art as a Novelist	2
Craig, Alan. The Banned Books of England (Discussion and Criticism of the Law of Obscene Libel)	2
Harrison, G. B. Introducing Shakespeare ..	2

French:

Hugo, Victor. Les Feuilles d'Automne ..	3
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Latin:

Tacitus. Annals, Books I-IV, Introduction, Summary of Contents, etc., by H. Furneaux ..	1
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Russian:

Pushkin, A. S. Three Tales: Text with Translation by R. T. Curral	2
---	---

Biography:	<i>Vols.</i>
Fox, Caroline (1819-1871), by Wilson Harris ..	5
Marie-Antoinette, The Personal Life of, by Charles Kunstler ..	3
Newman, Cardinal, by William Barry ..	2
History:	
Cary, M. A History of Rome down to the Reign of Constantine ..	14
Oman, Carola. Britain against Napoleon ..	4
Trend, J. B. Civilisation in Spain ..	3
Current Affairs (for temporary circulation only):	
"British Survey." British in the Far East.	
Englishman in Paris, 1940-1944.	
France Overseas.	
Greece, Roumania, Hungary.	
The I.L.O.	
Manchuria and Manchoukuo.	
Nigeria.	
Opinions in U.S.A.	
War Potential of Japan.	
Cartland, Ronald. The Common Problem.	
Cowlis, Virginia. How America is Governed ..	2
Education, Ministry of. Grant Regulations, No. 2. Education in England and Wales.	
Government of Britain and the Citizen.	
Penrose, Roland. In the Service of the People.	
Pickles, Dorothy M. France. (Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs).	
Pickthorne, K. Principles and Prejudices.	

To Blind Students of Theology.

All theological books in Braille which have been circulated by Canon Barrett Ayres at Grantown-on-Spey during the war, will be returned to London shortly. Will readers of the Students' Library of the National Institute for the Blind note that all applications for theological books, and all volumes at present out on loan, should in future be sent to 224, Great Portland Street, London W.1.

MANUSCRIPT MUSIC LIBRARY.

Piano:	
Schubert:	
Sonata No. 6 in B, Op. 147 (edited by Franklin Taylor) (602).	
Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. posth. (edited by Franklin Taylor) (603).	
Theory and Music Literature:	
Vale, Walter S.:	
Plainsong (an outline of its theory and interpretation with certain references to its use in the Church of England), 2 vols. (604, 605).	
Tone Production in the Human Voice (606).	

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1,
and Northern Branch,
5, St. John Street, Manchester, 3.

ADDITIONS.

Fiction:	<i>Vols.</i>
*†Bates, Ralph. Fields of Paradise ..	4
Bowen, Elizabeth. Look at All those Roses. (Short Stories) ..	3
*Carr, J. Dickson. Man Who Could not Shudder	1
Dare, Simon. September Reaping ..	4
*†Davis, Clyde. Anointed ..	2
*†Dowdey, Clifford. Gambler's Hundred ..	3
Eberhart, Mignon G. Wolf in Man's Clothing	5
Farjeon, Eleanor. Fair Venetian ..	5
Ferguson, Margaret. Touchstone ..	5
Footner, Hulbert. Death of a Saboteur ..	4
Forbes, Esther. Johnny Tremain ..	4
*†Goodrich, Marcus. Delilah ..	5
Greenwood, Robert. Squad Goes Out ..	5

*†Hahn, Emily. Mr. Pan ..	2
*†Harsanyi, Zsolt de. Star-gazer (Story of Galileo) ..	6
Heyer, Georgeette. Friday's Child ..	6
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† Kindly presented by the American Library in the American Embassy, London, on behalf of the Library of Congress.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

THE TRIBUNE.

The National Association of Blind Workers announces with regret that the publication of the *Tribune* has been suspended until the full Delegate Conference in the autumn, when consideration will be given to the appointment of an Hon. Editor in place of the late Miss Dorothy Cleaver. Her successor as Hon. Secretary, is Mr. A. J. Giles, 48, The Main Way, Chorleywood, Herts, to whom all branch contributions and communications should be addressed. For the present, it would be advisable to withhold subscriptions for the magazine until further notice.

WANTED, kindly persons to look after three blind old ladies, one living in Sandhurst, and two in Newbury districts. Live in, rent free. Secretary, Berks County Blind Society, Town Hall Chambers, Reading.

WANTED: FOREMAN to take charge of **BRUSH-MAKING DEPARTMENT OF BLIND WORKERS**, capable of using Electric Hand-Drill for boring brush-stocks. Commencing wage £6 weekly. All applications to reach the Secretary, Blind Institution, 116, Eaton Crescent, Swansea, no later than Monday, July 23rd, 1945.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All Home Teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.

SIGHTED FEMALE HOME TEACHER FOR BIRMINGHAM AREA. State age and experience. College of Teachers of the Blind Diploma, and three recent testimonials required. Salary £180 to £250 per annum according to experience, plus cost of living bonus. Apply Secretary, Blind Institution, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17.

HOME TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1946. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND HOME INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT, REIGATE. Applications are invited for the post of **Visiting Supervisor of Home Workers** engaged in Round Machine Knitting. Applicants must be thoroughly conversant with Round Machine Knitting. Commencing salary £208 per annum. Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, should be addressed to Manager, Home Industries Dept., 31, Holmdale Road, Reigate, Surrey.

INSTRUCTOR or INSTRUCTRESS required for **COURSES IN TELEPHONE SWITCHBOARD OPERATION** shortly to be opened at the Royal Victoria School for the Blind, Benwell Dene, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 5. Ability to teach Braille and typewriting essential. Candidate appointed will be required to undergo a course of training in telephony for the purpose of instruction in this subject. Apply Headmaster.

NATIONAL DEAF-BLIND HELPERS' LEAGUE. Holiday Home for the Deaf-Blind, Trinity Road, Hoylake, Cheshire.

The Fellowship House Committee much regret that they are unable to accept any further applications for holiday accommodation, as the Home is still full with evacuees for whom Homes cannot be found.

NATIONAL DEAF-BLIND HELPERS' LEAGUE. Holiday Home for the Deaf Blind, Trinity Road, Hoylake, Cheshire.

Applications are invited for the position of Matron at above Home, accommodating 12 deaf-blind people. The position becomes vacant on the 1st September next, and the salary offered is £150 per annum. Further particulars may be had from the Hon. Secretary, to whom applications should be sent.

DEVON COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of **Home Teacher** (sighted). Salary, if certificated, £168 per annum, rising to £250, plus 10 per cent. War Bonus. Applicants must be willing to reside in or near Torquay or Paignton, and be able to drive a car. Application form can be had from the Secretary, Devon County Association for the Blind, Church House, The Close, Exeter.

MACHINE REQUIRED FOR MAKING COIR PLAIT. New or second-hand. Particulars to Cardiff Institute for the Blind, Cardiff.

Experienced certificated **HOME TEACHER** seeks re-engagement. Apply "Home Teacher," c/o Editor, THE NEW BEACON.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF WAKEFIELD WELFARE OF THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the position of **Secretary of the Blind Department** at a salary of £300 per annum (including War Bonus).

Applications, stating age, qualifications, and experience (if any) should be sent to me not later than the 25th July, 1945. Canvassing in any form, either directly or indirectly, will be a disqualification.

W. S. DES FORGES,
Town Clerk.

BEDFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Certificated Sighted Woman Home Teacher of the Blind required, to act under direction of the South Bedfordshire Welfare Officer for the Blind (Luton). Salary £180 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £240 per annum, together with cost of living bonus and travelling expenses.

The person selected for appointment will be required to pass a medical examination with a view to inclusion in the Superannuation Scheme under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937.

Applications, stating age, experience and qualifications, with copies of three recent testimonials, to be sent to The Clerk of the Bedfordshire County Council, Shire Hall, Bedford. J. B. GRAHAM,
9th July, 1945. Clerk of the Council.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING Blind Persons Act, 1920.

Appointment of Home Teacher and Supervisor.

Applications are invited for the post of a **female (sighted) Home Teacher and Visitor of blind persons and Supervisor of the Blind Home Workers** in Reading, at a salary at the rate of £183 per annum, rising, subject to satisfactory service, by annual increments of £13 to £209 per annum (the maximum salary of the post) together with a cost of living bonus, at present at the rate of 18s. 6d. per week.

Applicants must have some knowledge of handicrafts suitable for blind persons, of home workers' trades and of Braille, as well as an ability to teach.

The appointment will be made subject to termination by one month's notice on either side and to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Every application must be in the candidate's own handwriting, stating age, experience and qualifications, and date when services would be available, and must be accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, and be delivered to me, endorsed "Home Teacher and Supervisor," not later than Tuesday, 31st instant.

Town Hall, Reading. G. F. DARLOW,
July, 14th, 1945. Town Clerk.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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3s. PER ANNUM: POST FREE:

"THEY SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED OUT BY THEMSELVES!"

By HARRY BOOTH

AMONG the many blind people accustomed to going about alone, there must be few indeed who have not on occasion been confronted by the attitude suggested in my title. True, it usually carries with it the Gilbertian concession, "What, never? Well, hardly ever!" True, also, that it can coexist along with feelings of unreflective wonder regarding the sensational feats which, once in a while, make blindness exciting, and give it a little romantic publicity. Blind Jack of Knaresborough—safely dead these many years—is an admirable example of courage and initiative; but blind Tom of —, very much alive and full of enterprise, is a public menace!

Glance once more at my title, and note particularly the pronouns. They are in the third person plural and thus stamp the sentence with the hallmark of respectability and authority which generalised statements so easily acquire. My aim in this article is to say something about the difficulties and responsibilities of the blind man on the road—something, too, concerning the curious psychological reactions which his presence often provokes.

A favourite walk of mine involves the crossing of two neighbouring bridges. The first is simple, being in line with a wide and well-defined path. The second is much narrower and, though amply protected by handrails, it lies off the main path and must be approached with caution. Beyond this second bridge the path curves round in a semicircle, and then there is the river on one's left and, a foot or two below path-level, an attractive water-meadow on one's right. The route is overhung by willows which might playfully remove the hat or glasses of the unwary blind walker. On a recent fine but windy afternoon I was pursuing this part of the walk when the words of my present title were flung with great feeling in my general direction. They have recurred to me continually ever since. What lies behind this little explosion? I am sometimes guilty of running, to the public danger—when trying to catch an important bus, for instance, or working off a fit of temper—but on this occasion the risk, if it could be said to exist, was wholly my own. No prams, no bath-chairs, no one stooping in the middle of the path to tie a shoe-lace; and yet—"They should never be allowed out by themselves!" Why? What was passing through the speaker's mind when those words were launched at me? Of course, I can only guess, but the guess is worth making since it raises so many interesting points for discussion. Was it perhaps something like this:—

"See that man coming over the big bridge? Why, he's blind! Does he know where he is? My God, he'll be in the river in two seconds! I shouldn't care to follow this path in the dark . . . He'll never get round on to the straight without a fall . . . Ought I to help him? . . . Suppose I were to be like that one day . . . ! Stop plucking at my nerves . . . ! Go away . . . ! Stay at home . . . ! I don't want to think about unpleasant things . . . Can't he have a guide—if he *must* come this way . . ."

Comment on such reflections cannot easily be confined within the limited space at my disposal, but one or two points emerge clearly. There is first the strong tendency among the seeing to assume that a blind man's sensations and experiences must be precisely what *theirs* would be, were they to be suddenly plunged into absolute darkness. This wholly false analogy has been exposed time and again in these columns. Then there is the fact—which perhaps few would have the courage to admit—that the casually encountered blind person may be a reminder of unpleasant possibilities, especially in war-time; the fact, too, that he is liable to be an unwitting disturber of the peace, breaking with one clumsy or hesitant footfall the smooth but brittle surface of a tranquil hour.

A little selfishness and a great deal of misunderstanding: it is a mixture that is only too familiar to all of us in our better moments.

On this note of easy tolerance, the matter might well be dropped but for my restless, probing disposition—together with a certain interest in some of the conclusions which would seem to follow from what I have said so far. Can we blind walkers remain indifferent to even occasional outbursts of resentment? I think not. We can perhaps afford to smile at the implied threat to our freedom of movement. The disasters that would come upon the blind if the recommendation in my title were ever given effect would be so overwhelming that we can only turn our backs decisively on such a nightmare possibility. There is, however, an unspoken criticism of our appearance, our bearing—our whole aura, if I may be permitted the word—which cannot be ignored. The individual is made sharply aware of those pronouns in the third person plural; he is being judged, not as a man, but as a blind man.

("The blind are so musical"; "The blind have such rich spiritual resources"; "The blind are so helpless"; "For a blind man, he looks quite neat"; "The blind are such an expensive nuisance.") No, the individual cannot escape a sense of responsibility toward the

blind world as a whole. What the seeing think of us is, whether we like it or not, a matter of vital importance from both the social and economic standpoints—and we must never overlook that unscientific but almost universal habit of generalising from a few random instances.

Does all this commit us to accepting the "cult of the normal" from the cradle upwards? I hope not—not, at least, in its old and unimaginative interpretation. The seeing must be helped to understand blindness better and thus to view it more intelligently. We face them with so many bewildering problems . . .

"See that chap in the brown suit? You'd never think he was blind, would you?" "He can't be! No blind man could walk with such brisk confidence." "He is, though; he tunes my piano twice a year."

Let us follow this paragon for a moment. The building line juts out sharply a few yards ahead, but he knows all about that and allows for it without so much as touching the wall with the stick that swings loosely at his side. He posts a letter without stopping or fumbling, moves an inch or two to the left to avoid knocking over a bicycle that is leaning against the curb. But now there comes a sudden change; Brown Suit stiffens in his tracks, moves each foot as if it had an invisible weight attached to it, and makes exploratory gestures with his stick. A stranger catching sight of him at that moment is moved to voluble pity:

"Poor fellow; such a dreadful affliction; I was always helpless myself in the black-out." Our final glimpse of Brown Suit shows him once more striding along as if he hadn't a care in the world. ("It's simply marvellous the way they get about; of course, they have a sixth sense . . . Every handicap has its compensations.")

Why did Brown Suit convey to the passer-by such sharply contrasted impressions within the space of five minutes? The explanation is amazingly simple. It's all a matter of soundscape. When we first met him, the road was relatively quiet and there was a high wall on his left which threw back to his attentive ear the crisp, firm echo of his footfalls. A moment or two later, a column of army lorries interspersed with that supremely noisy type of motor-cycle so dear to the hearts of young despatch-riders, blotted out Brown Suit's normal world of sounds; he was, one might say, dazzled by an overwhelming glare of sounds. At the same time, the friendly wall on his left had been replaced by nothingness. A row of gardens from which the railings are missing

may not seem particularly insubstantial to you, but they render the shifting sound-world of the blind even more indeterminate than it commonly is in a busy, built-up area. The wholesale removal of railings gave me many shocks. In some cases, I had never been aware of the part played by railings in the soundscape until they vanished so disconcertingly.

A little genuine curiosity about blindness and the blind would soon do away with what I can only call the superstitions of which examples have been given in this article. In their own interests, the blind should go half-way to meet such an advance. Some of us have worked very hard to that end, but the blind man with psychological leanings will be endlessly puzzled and intrigued by the behaviour of the seeing in some of their briefer contacts with him. A few illustrations will serve to round off this article.

A lady taking me across a busy road remarked as we reached the island: "Did you want to go all the way over?" I could think of no adequate reply and answered tamely "Yes, please."

Then there are the guides who project their own nervousness on to you: "Wait a minute, wait a minute! No, don't go yet—the traffic on this road is simply awful"; I turn to the lady who is clutching my arm feverishly and reply "That's all right; I'm waiting for you to say the word." "No, no," she persists, "come back; we can't start yet." And so on. I breathe a prayer of thankfulness when that ordeal is safely over.

How frequently one is addressed in a jocular or patronising tone. "Stand still, young man; I'm just coming to take you across the road."

"You going over the road, chum?" "Right you are, me ole cock-sparrer!" "Take hold of my arm, love." "Feel the wall with your stick; there, that's all right; there's another gentleman a few yards on who'll be able to take you a bit farther."

Some of this is supposed to hide the guide's feelings of embarrassment and pity; some of it is just good-natured comradeship; some of it asserts quite unconsciously the natural sense of superiority enjoyed by the seeing over the blind.

What I find most irritating is the indirect approach. "Do you think that man wants to cross the road?" "Yes, he does; I wonder if he'd like me to help him." "He might, but they are, so touchy sometimes about offers of help"; at which I, who am not deaf, feel tempted to butt in with "Ask him and find out." People are remarkably inconsistent in this matter of the blind and what they hear. They credit us with astonishing—and often wholly mythical—powers of aural discernment; and yet they feel at liberty to speculate freely about us in loud voices when they happen to spot us in the street.

It may surprise some readers that there has not been a single reference to the white stick in my article. Logically I ought to stress the value of the white stick and to urge its general adoption, but, on strictly irrational grounds, I have a deep-rooted aversion to any such distinguishing badge, and shall therefore say no more about it.

I have passed somewhat lightly over several interesting and controversial points. I may perhaps return to some of these in a later article.

HOME NEWS

Hampshire's Additional Help to its Home Workers.—The Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind has recently taken some interesting steps to benefit its Home Workers. In the first place, it has introduced a bonus of 5s. per week to all machine knitters whose earnings reach 17s. 6d. a week or over. This move has already proved very successful, as all except one of the Association's knitters have increased their earnings to a minimum of 21s. 6d. per week. Secondly, it has decided that each Home Worker should be entitled to three weeks holiday per annum, and that a grant of 17s. 6d. per week, in excess of augmentation, should be paid to cover the loss of earnings, the total amount of

£2 12s. 6d. being given at the beginning of each summer. Thirdly, Home Workers are to receive extra payments during periods of sickness, at the rate of 17s. 6d. per week in excess of augmentation.

Group Listening.—The attention of blind persons who belong to Listening Groups is called to two interesting series of weekly broadcasts. The first, entitled "Man in Society," is to be given on Mondays (7.30-8 p.m.), from October 1st to December 10th, and deals with human behaviour in relation to current problems—ranging from the re-education of Germany to vocational and child guidance. The second is a new series of "To Start You Talking,"

and will take place from 8.10 to 8.30 p.m. on Thursdays, beginning on September 27th and ending on December 13th.

Blind Welfare in Northern Ireland.—Speaking in the Ulster House of Commons recently, the Minister of Health and Local Government said that responsibility for allowances to the blind would probably be transferred from local authorities to the State under any future scheme for social insurance. He hoped, however, that "the splendid voluntary organisations" would continue their work.

Southern Regional Refresher Course for Home Teachers.—Accommodation in schools being more difficult than ever to find, the Southern Regional Association for the Blind decided this year to hold its Refresher Course for Home Teachers in London, and thirty Home Teachers from different parts of the Southern Region spent the week from July 16th to 20th in town.

Though the advantages of living under one roof may have been missed, and travelling conditions and the finding of meals proved strenuous, it was possible to provide in London a more varied programme for the Course, which included not only lectures and instruction at 14, Howick Place, but visits to the National Library, the National Institute and the Royal Eye Hospital. It was a special privilege to be able to hold the handicraft instruction at the Salusbury Road Workshops for the Blind, where a room was put at the disposal of the Home Teachers and their instructors for two whole afternoons and one morning. The spacious modern and light building is in itself a revelation of what can be done to employ the blind under ideal conditions.

Instead of inviting lecturers to come down and address the Home Teachers at the place where the Course was being held, this year the Home Teachers listened to some of the lecturers on their own ground, and some of the atmosphere of each particular branch of work must have been subconsciously assimilated. Lectures on the importance of the Central Register and the functions of a Regional Association were listened to in the Board Room at 14, Howick Place. There were lectures here too on Mental Deficiency, Office Administration, Placement in Industry, the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, and a special demonstration on Wireless Maintenance by a technical expert who brought with him one of the British Wireless for the Blind Fund sets to show how minor faults could be remedied simply at home.

The work and aim of the National Library to provide all blind readers with the books they want was sympathetically described in the Library itself. A lecture on the Deaf-Blind

was given at the National Institute, and this was followed by an inspection of special apparatus used by the blind, and a visit to the printing department. After a free afternoon the Home Teachers met again at the Royal Eye Hospital on the evening of July 18th to hear a lecture by Professor Arnold Sorsby on Prevention and Causes of Blindness.

The intervals between lectures were happily filled with handicraft instruction at Salusbury Road. Here there were demonstrations and practice in basketry, cane-work, netting and weaving. As usual, time proved too short to try all that was desired in the way of new crafts.

The whole week was crowded with information and fresh impressions which will undoubtedly give new impetus and vigour to the work of all those who attended the Course.

So much interest was shown in an address by Miss A. S. Evans (Middlesex Home Teacher) on a Social Club organised by a Committee of Blind Persons that this address has been stencilled in full, and is available from the Secretary, Southern Regional Association for the Blind, 14, Howick Place, London, S.W.1.

Chorleywood Old Girls' Reunion.—A Reunion of the Chorleywood College Old Girls' Association was held from Friday, July 27th to Monday, July 30th, with an extension until August 2nd for those who wished to stay. This Reunion held a special significance as the Association was celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary.

The first official function, and the main one of the Reunion, was the dinner held on Friday night. At the conclusion of the dinner, Hazel Winter, Chairman of the Association, introduced the speakers. First came Pat Hart, a representative of the present school, who welcomed the Old Girls and gave them a summary of the activities of the school since the last Reunion in 1939. The second speaker was Miss McHugh, who has lately succeeded Miss Monk as the headmistress of the school and who was representing the present staff. In her speech Miss McHugh endorsed Pat's sentiment that, although changes had taken place, the spirit of the school remained the same. She was followed by Miss Monk, who reminded all present of what they owed to friends of the school both past and present. Next came Miss Deavin, representing past members of the staff, who said that since leaving and so gaining a truer perspective, she had felt her tie with the school to be, if anything, strengthened. The guest speaker was Mr. Eagar, Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind. Although he began in a somewhat light vein, his hearers soon realised that he was providing them with much food for thought.

He also held out hopes that, before very long, general improvements of the school building might be carried out.

On Saturday afternoon a General Meeting of the Association was held, and in the evening a party went to the theatre in Watford.

An "At Home" took place on Sunday afternoon to which many friends of the school were invited. In the evening a service was taken by Miss McHugh, during which Miss Upcott gave a most inspiring address.

"The week-end," says Miss Elaine Hett, Secretary of the Association, "was a great success and we are looking forward to the next Reunion."

Road Accidents.—The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents is holding a Conference in the autumn with a view to obtaining the advice and co-operation of all women's and child welfare organisations in an effort to solve the problem of child road accidents. All such movements as this deserve the support of organisations for the blind, as the continued high rate of mortality and injury due to road accidents specially affects blind pedestrians of all ages. The greatest need is the acquisition of "road sense" and its invariable display as a good example to adults and children alike.

New Home for Blind Needed in Scotland.—At the annual meeting of the Royal Blind Asylum and School, Edinburgh, with the Earl of Haddington in the chair, an appeal for £10,000 was made for an additional home for blind women to absorb the long waiting list. The existing Thomas Burns Home for Blind Women accommodates 66, exclusive of staff, and is the only Home of its kind in Scotland. To it come blind women from all parts of the country. The directors, it was stated, have inspected several properties with a view to housing at least another 40.

Newington House and St. Dunstan's.—Newington House—the Scottish National Institution for the War-Blinded—has had an agreement with St. Dunstan's in the matter of appealing for funds for the war-blinded. At the annual meeting of the Institution, Professor James Drever said that it was felt that certain characteristics of this agreement were not satisfactory from their point of view, and that there was a danger that Newington House would be confused with St. Dunstan's. While satisfactory results were obtained as regards funds, they felt that they were suffering from a loss of legacies from Scottish individuals who bequeathed funds—as they thought to Newington House—under the name of St. Dunstan's "in Edinburgh" or "in Scotland." Accordingly, this year a new agree-

ment had been entered into with St. Dunstan's, and Newington House would be wholly responsible for appeals in Scotland.

Professor Drever said that they believed that they were able to make a definite contribution in the matter of the treatment of the blind, and that it was in the interest of the blind that they should remain an independent institution, and contribute their own share to the general advancement with regard to the teaching of the blind all over the world.

Professor Drever also referred to the establishment during the year of an Advisory Council. It had, he said, been felt that the institution, really a national one, ought to have a wider representation over the whole of the country than it had had in the past.

Royal School's Annual Sports.—The 13th Annual Sports Day of the Royal School for the Blind, Dorton House, Aylesbury, took place last month in perfect weather. It was organised by the Hampstead Rotary Club, whose members' zeal was only outshone by the enthusiasm and enjoyment of the children. The events consisted of long distance and flat races, high jumps and a cricket match, spoon and potato races, dressing and whistling races, sack races and wheelbarrow races, for the various ages of the competitors.

Bristol Blind Workers' Earnings Nearly Doubled.—The Lord Mayor of Bristol (Mr. W. F. Cottrell), presiding at the annual meeting of the Bristol Royal Blind Asylum last month, said that on looking through the statement of accounts he noticed that the income of adult blind workers for 1935-36 was £7,870, while in 1944-45 fewer workers had an income of nearly twice the amount, that was, £14,088.

Blind Children's Skill in Music.—The Dean of York (the Very Rev. E. Milner-White), referred at the annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the York School for the Blind last month to the remarkable progress of blind children in their musical studies. He also mentioned the considerable work done by the School for the happiness and betterment of the children.

Mr. W. P. Swann, Principal, said that they hoped soon to satisfy demands for further accommodation, including the enlargement of class rooms and improvement of appointments when restrictions were removed.

He also reported the excellent progress of the girls who attended the Haxby Road domestic science centre. It was hoped that the blind children would soon be enabled to link up with sighted young people in local youth clubs and church institutes.

Postal Censorship and Dispatch.—From the 7th August, no censorship will be required for postal despatches from Great Britain or Northern Ireland to any territories except China (unoccupied), Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria and Germany. Readers should note that Blind literature cannot at present be accepted for despatch to any *liberated* or *enemy* territory except Belgium, France, Denmark, Norway, Luxemburg and the Channel Islands.

Portsmouth's Plans for the Blind.—Alderman Langmaid announced at the annual meeting of the Portsmouth Voluntary Association for the Blind last month that it was hoped to extend the Jubilee Home for the Blind at Wymering to include accommodation for all disabled blind persons and also to extend the occupations at the workshops for all classes of the blind.

Robin Hood in Braille.—The Nottingham Rotary Club recently provided the Philadelphia Rotary Club with a number of copies of the booklet issued by the *Nottingham Journal* entitled "Nottinghamshire: the Robin Hood County," and they were so much appreciated that the Philadelphia club arranged to have a Braille edition printed at their own expense. One hundred and fifty copies of this edition for the blind have now been prepared and they are being sent to institutions for the blind in all parts of the United States. Two, also, are coming to Nottingham, of which one is destined for the Nottingham Public Library, and the other, presumably, will find its way to the Royal Midland Institution for the Blind.

The Bishop of Liverpool on Service for the Blind.—"The work being done by these societies deserves our greatest admiration. For a man or woman to lose their sight is the greatest handicap. You feel cut off from the whole of life," said the Bishop of Liverpool (Dr. Clifford

A. Martin), speaking at the annual meeting of the Liverpool Workshops and Birkenhead Society for the Blind (Inc.) and the Liverpool Home Teaching Society for the Out-door Blind last month.

Blind Beggars in London.—The L.C.C. Committee on the Welfare of the Blind report that they are disturbed that, despite the provision made by the Council for assistance to blind persons, public begging in London by a number of them continues. It was difficult to suggest a remedy, as the public are understandably very sympathetic towards the blind. Any encouragement of blind persons to beg, however, had an adverse effect on them, and the public, and particularly visitors to the Metropolis, were given a false and unwarranted impression that blind persons were reduced to begging to meet their needs. It was felt that begging by blind persons would be considerably reduced or would cease if the public could be brought to realise that the Council's scheme for the welfare and assistance of blind persons made begging by them unnecessary.

Lord Mottistone on Blind Welfare.—At the annual meeting of the Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind last month, the Lord Lieutenant, Major-General Lord Mottistone, president of the Association, who was in the chair, said he made up his mind that Hampshire and the Isle of Wight should contribute all the working expenses of the lifeboats they maintained, leaving the parent institution to defray the capital charges, and he hoped they would continue to do similarly in the case of the blind. He believed they would raise enough money in the country for the running expenses of the welfare and care of the blind, leaving the capital charges to headquarters and to "a benevolent Government." Lord Mottistone referred to Their Majesties' deep interest in the welfare of the blind.

FOREIGN NEWS

Attempt to Bar French Blind Choirmasters.—The French Braille journal *Louis Braille*, dated 1st July, contains a vigorous protest against the proposed action of a new union which is being formed by organist-choirmasters in laying down a rule that no blind person should be allowed to exercise the duties of a choirmaster. The journal says: "We are determined to use every means in our power to prevent such a rule coming into force." All blind organist-choirmasters are asked to obtain, if possible from

their Parish priests, a certificate stating that their duties are performed in a satisfactory manner, and advised to join the Association des Organistes Maitres de Chapelle et Chanteurs Aveugles, with headquarters at Chelles.

Fund for American Eye Bank.—The formation of the American Eye Bank for Sight Restoration was described in the June issue of THE NEW BEACON. Mrs. Breckinridge, executive director, has now announced that the Eye Bank will undertake to raise one million dollars to carry on its

programme of education and research. An initial grant of \$25,000 has been made by the Milbank Memorial Fund.

The Blind and Radio Repairs.—The Radio Engineering Institute of Omaha, Nebraska, has just begun a course of 12 months' training in "radio servicing" for blind students. The scheme owes its origin to a blind man who had been running his own radio repair shop for some time. Ten students are being admitted to the year's course, and though these are civilians, it is expected that in future the classes will consist largely of blind ex-service men, as the scheme has aroused the keen interest of State Rehabilitation Officers.

Finger Painting for Blind Children.—Miss Trum-Hunter, a teacher of blind children in New Jersey, is experimenting with finger painting and believes it has possibilities of educational value—mainly because it brings the blind child into direct touch with his work and helps to strengthen co-ordinated movement and provides the fingers with strength and flexibility.

Ophthalmic Conditions in Central China.—G. H. Pearson, says *Medical Press*, contributes an interesting account of ophthalmic conditions

in Central China, based on 24 years' residence. During the last two years he has been entirely cut off by the Japanese blockade from all access to scientific printed matter. There is a high proportion of severe myopia, especially among students. Crudely ground lenses are made locally and rock-crystal lenses are preferred to mere glass. Acute "Ho Yen," or "fire eye" conjunctivitis, is very common. Trachoma is one of China's most pressing public health problems. Spring catarrh seems associated in many cases. Many cases of pterygium seem to occur in old trachoma patients. Syphilis and syphilitic eye trouble is widely prevalent and almost untreated. Gonorrhœal conjunctivitis is common. Blinded children from ophthalmia neonatorum are often left to die by their disappointed parents. Measles is common and, besides conjunctivitis, is responsible for much debility and even cancrum oris or noma. Such cases may get keratomalacia with massive ulceration of the cornea. Smallpox frequently attacks the cornea, leaving a dense white scar. The treatment of sympathetic ophthalmia is difficult, because local anti-foreign propaganda used the slogan that foreign doctors gouge out your eyes to make their medicine of them.

"WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ACT"

By TIRESIAS

THE Disabled Persons (Employment) Act is now in full operation by virtue of two Orders in Council, dated 15th August, 1944 and 28th May, 1945. Much has yet to be done before the Act becomes fully effective. In particular,

local Employment Agencies have to compile their registers of disabled persons, and the Minister has to determine what shall be the percentage of the quota for different industries. Amongst many questions of interpretation which have yet to be answered are two points of fundamental importance for the Blind, and this first anniversary of the Commencement Order gives us a fitting opportunity to discuss them.

I. "Disabled" or "Seriously Disabled."

Most of us are now reconciled to the classification of the blind as "disabled persons." Perhaps, in time, we may even be able to face the prospect of regarding them as "invalids" for the purpose of the "Invalidity Benefit" provided in the National Insurance Scheme. Neither expression is appropriate, but we need not quarrel about names, so long as the definition

which accompanies them does not imply a damaging status for the blind.

Under Section 1 of the Act a disabled person means someone who, "on account of injury, disease or congenital deformity, is substantially handicapped in obtaining or keeping employment, or in undertaking work on his own account, of a kind which, apart from that injury, disease or deformity, would be suited to his age, experience, and qualifications."

So far as the blind and partially sighted are concerned, this definition is wider and wiser than that given in the Blind Persons Acts. It will include not only all people of working age who are now registered as blind, but also people who, though not technically blind, are substantially handicapped, on account of weak sight, from getting and keeping suitable work. The Act clearly intends that each application for registration under this definition should be judged on its merits by the local Resettlement Committee or the staff of the Ministry of Labour. They will have regard not only to the amount of sight which the applicant has, but also to the intelligence with which he can use it.

Not less important, from our point of view, is

the definition of a "seriously disabled" person, given in Section 15 (1). Sheltered employment under this definition, will be provided for people who "by reason of the nature or severity of their disablement are unlikely, either at any time, or until the lapse of a prolonged period, to be able otherwise to obtain employment, or to undertake work on their own account (whether because employment or such work would not be available to them, or because they would be unlikely to be able to compete therein on terms comparable as respects earnings and security with those enjoyed by persons engaged therein who are not subject to disablement)."

We need not here question the appropriateness of the phrase "seriously disabled" as a description of workers who need sheltered employment, except to remark that it is not so much the severity of a man's disablement as his attitude towards it which usually leads him to choose sheltered instead of open employment. There are now, and probably always will be, many blind people for whom workshop employment is the only practicable way of life. The danger is that, under the Section 15 definition, the Blind as a class could be ruled collectively into sheltered employment, or blindness itself could be regarded *prima facie* as a "serious disability." During the war, many hundreds of blind factory workers have shown that they can hold their own against seeing competition, and long before the war, blind masseurs proved, in the most conclusive way, that they could compete in their profession "on terms comparable as respects earnings and security" with seeing masseurs. To regard all blind people as "seriously disabled" in the sense of the Act would aggravate rather than relieve the moral effect of blindness, and in many cases would unavoidably condemn to segregation blind people who desire a fully social and economic life. This would clearly be contrary to the spirit of the Act, which aims at fitting disabled people, not merely for work, but, as far as possible, for work of a type for which they would have been suited if they had not been disabled. We are convinced that the only sensible way of dealing with the blind or, for that matter, with any group of disabled people, is to treat each person on his individual merits.

2. *Nationalisation, Municipalisation ; Industrialisation, Pauperisation.*

Under Section 15 of the Act a Workshop for the Blind may be administered as a Department of a Local Authority, as a voluntary agency of one or more Local Authorities, or as a voluntary body recognised by the Ministry of Labour. The choice between these possibilities must be

made on economic, not political, grounds, and the long-term interests of the blind worker must be the dominant consideration. Section 15 (5) (c) of the Act, which enables Local Authorities, with the approval of the Ministry of Labour, to continue their responsibility for Workshops for the Blind, was not in the original draft of the Bill. It was inserted by the Government during the Committee stage, and does not accord well with the general logic of the Section. Under the new system Local Authorities have no power to provide employment for any class of disabled workers except the blind. If such authorities had not, despite some reluctance, been compelled in 1920 to provide employment for the blind, nobody in 1944 would have suggested that such employment should be taken out of the industrial field and put into that of local government.

Undoubtedly Local Authorities have been generous. They have met trading losses, augmented earnings, and adopted scales of minimum wages. In some cases they have built and equipped spacious and convenient workshops. But in the matter of employment, generosity is not enough. Under Local Authority responsibility Workshops in general have lost economic character. Trading losses have increased as emphasis on earning real wages has become weaker. Incentives have disappeared, and augmentation payments have tended to become the main element in total remuneration. Workshops for the Blind, if they are to survive, must be brought on to a higher plane of economic efficiency. They have an important part, which they are anxious to play, in the new order of things, and cannot rest content with the existing system in the light of its failure to preserve economic realities.

Responsibility for Workshop employment has, in fact, been a source of constant embarrassment to Local Authorities. They have been subject to political pressure more acute in some areas than others, and to the clamour of uninstructed public opinion. Many of them have successfully resisted the temptation to gain political kudos at the expense of industrial efficiency, but whatever may be its wishes in the matter, a publicly elected body cannot, in the nature of things, pay regard solely to the vital principle that a workshop exists to enable its workers, so far as possible, to earn a living on their merits as workmen.

If workshops are to make the best of their new opportunity and are to develop more remunerative trades, they must have the guidance of experts qualified to take the widest possible view of industrial questions. Local

Authorities cannot be expected to provide such guidance, and their supervisors in the past, even when they had a knowledge of the blind, too often lacked industrial experience. Moreover, the cost of re-equipping workshops for their new tasks will be considerable, and while it will be possible for Local Authorities to meet that cost, it could more appropriately be borne by the Ministry of Labour, which is responsible to Parliament for the success of the new policy.

We cannot ignore the possibility that, unless Workshops for the Blind are part of the new system of sheltered employment undertakings, they will be subject to competition from that system. There is, of course, no reason why a workshop under Local Authority control should not enjoy the benefits of public contracts allocated by the Ministry of Labour, but it could do so more readily if it were in direct association with that Ministry. It is questionable whether Workshops for the Blind can develop a wide

range of new processes unless they are able to open their doors to the sighted disabled. Local Authorities, however, are not responsible for any disabled workers except the blind, and in consequence co-employment will be possible only if workshops are fully integrated into the new system under the control of the Ministry of Labour.

The conclusion seems unavoidable that Workshops for the Blind can develop their full usefulness only if they are brought into the main stream of development under the new Act. The present boom will be shortlived, and when peacetime conditions return, the staple products of our workshops will be more than ever subject to foreign and mechanised competition. The present situation has its new dangers as well as its new opportunities. In retrospect, the decision which our workshops now have to make may well appear as the turning point in their history.

BLIND INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT

A Survey of the Present Position and Opportunities

By E. W. PAGE

Industrial Employment Officer, National Institute for the Blind

WE are now in the vital period of change-over from war-time to peacetime industry, and now is the time, if the blind are to hold the position in industry which they have rightly earned during the war years, for the whole weight of Blind Welfare to be thrown into the task of assisting them to take advantage of the opportunities which their own capabilities and energy have created. Let us, therefore, examine the facts as they emerge in the light afforded by the work of the Industrial Employment Section of the National Institute for the Blind.

In spite of continuous publicity given to facts and figures illustrating the comparative outputs of blind and sighted workers in industrial jobs, we still hear in Blind Welfare circles hesitating queries on whether the blind can, or cannot, hold their own in industry. This doubting attitude should cease; there is no justification for it.

In the latter part of 1943 and early in 1944 an investigation was made by the N.I.B.'s Industrial Employment Section into the output figures of blind workers placed in war-time industry on a varied range of operations

covering manipulative, inspection and machine work.

The resulting analysis was as follows:—

Highest recorded output	..	122%
Lowest recorded output	..	87%
Average output	..	98.6%

The placements to which the above figures refer were made by the National Institute, Local Agencies, and the Ministry of Labour, and in some cases the jobs were obtained by the blind themselves. The aim of these placements was to give the blind an opportunity to play their part in the war effort; the jobs were in no way selected as likely to continue in peacetime. But two years of subsequent experience have enabled the Section to classify and clarify the position, so that now, clearly defined bases of judgment can be formed.

Can work, under present-day conditions, now be found for blind men? Yes. The Institute's Placement Section and St. Dunstan's are to-day both finding jobs for blind men in engineering, in pottery, in woodwork and joinery, and in many other industries. And the jobs are men's jobs. In war-time, some blind men were placed in jobs normally done by women or juveniles, but

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these cannot be regarded as lasting jobs under peace-time production costs. To-day, if work normally done by women is offered to blind men from a sympathetic point of view, it is courteously refused. Neither the Ministry of Labour nor the Trades Unions will permit such arrangements to be made between employers and blind employees.

Can these blind men doing men's work hold their own?

Yes. They wouldn't be in these jobs unless they could. The Section's policy of approach to employers practically insists on economic efficiency. Here is an extract from a letter written only the other week to a very large firm of motor engineers:—

"We desire that employment should be maintained on a fully economic basis. The blind employee should, after a reasonable trial and training period, be able to hold his own with sighted workers in a sighted job. Should he not do so we should certainly recommend that his services be dispensed with."

A claim such as that made in this letter does not impose on the blind employee. The Section has sufficient evidence before it to be certain that its insistence on such conditions does not strain or overload the physical or mental powers of the blind person. Placement after placement is being obtained on these terms and it may be said that *provided that the blind person is up to an average standard, and provided that the job has been selected rightly by the section*, he or she does NOT come out of employment.

The jobs in which this excellent standard of production can be obtained classify themselves as follows:—

1. Machine Operation—Semi-skilled.

The jobs are mainly in engineering; some are in woodwork and joinery. Generally, the machine used is rather larger than that normally operated by a woman or boy—heavy turret-capstan lathes, etc.

In this type of work, the blind worker's output is undoubtedly the highest.

Paid on a flat rate of 1s. 8d. per hour, with an output bonus of from 17½% to 22½%, comparative outputs with the sighted are now being reported to the Section—as high as 150% in the case of some workers at the London factory of Messrs. Marconi Wireless & Telegraph Co., Ltd., with an average of 133½%. This holds good throughout the industry and is in no way confined to one firm. Other firms bearing out this testimony may be recorded, such as Messrs. De Havilland Aircraft Co., Ltd., Messrs. The World Moulded Metal Co., Ltd., and others.

2. Inspection and Viewing (in Engineering).

This, in its fixed-gauge form, is a war-time innovation, but it has come to stay. Messrs. Hoovers, Ltd., have set up a department for inspection of goods inwards, modelled on the war-time system. Other firms are following suit.

In this work, the highly developed touch-sense of the blind has provided them with a discernment of size within fine limits far in excess of the sighted. Here, again, output is well up to and exceeding that of the sighted.

In some firms, however, the return to manufacture of small quantities of components will drive the fixed-gauge off the bench. A solution has been found to this new problem, and the National Institute, in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and Messrs. De Havilland Aircraft, Ltd., has designed a set of micrometers and precision instruments which can be used and read by the blind. When these instruments are in production, a number of blind persons, both male and female, already engaged in inspection work, will be enabled to retain their employment on "short run" work. Already, five firms have offered employment, conditional upon the provision of these instruments, and this is only a slight indication of the possibilities in this direction, as no large-scale campaign to obtain work in Viewing with the new range of instruments has been made by the Section.

3. Assembly and Manipulative Work Generally

This class of work needs very careful selection and handling, and generally speaking, its output figures do not in any way reach the level of those for the machine-job. If there is a large area of inspection by touch to be dealt with, such as the finding of screw-holes in large commercial radio installation panels, then the blind worker is at a disadvantage. In machine operations, double time has been made on many occasions by blind operators, but we have little or no indication that this can be achieved on work which requires detailed manipulation. It would seem that in this direction, the experience of the Section corresponds with that of the Workshops for the Blind in their basket and mat-making departments.

4. Packing and Despatch in Large Firms.

This work is more suited to the lower mental-type of blind person. There appears to be no undue disadvantage experienced by the blind person. At the works of Messrs. Kodak, Ltd., for instance, blind workers are keeping up to schedule with perfect satisfaction, and the same applies to those who are working at Messrs. Huntley & Palmers, Reading, Messrs. De La

Rue & Co., Ltd., Walthamstow, and elsewhere.

The Attitude of Employers.

Mainly as a result of the very fine publicity given to the employment of the blind by the Ministry of Labour in its *Engineering and Production Bulletin*, the whole question of Blind Employment is no longer a new thing to industrialists. They are aware that the blind can be employed economically and are prepared to face up to their responsibilities under the heading of disablement. What they do ask, and what the Section has to tell them, is "On what jobs can the blind attain this standard of efficiency so that they are an asset, and not a liability to the employers?"

The ascertainment of such jobs is a task which is yet in its infancy, but in the days to come it will be possible for an answer to this question to be given to any firm in any part of the country.

Meanwhile, we have to face the fact that the industry of war-time is not the industry of peace-time. Many types of work which were closed down for the duration will open up again, and the opportunities they may give to blind employment must be investigated. All this will take time. The necessity for concerted action by Blind Welfare to carry out this work on a nation-wide scale is, in the view of the Section, a matter which is of urgent necessity.

It must be realised that the task before us is not simply a question of providing a list of jobs which can be done by the blind and handing it to an employer, leaving the Ministry of Labour

to do the rest. A job which can be done in one factory cannot, in many cases, be done in another for technical and production-line reasons. Individual factories must therefore be investigated in each area. There is, too, the "human nature" element to be dealt with. Despite the publicity given, a very large percentage of the sighted population are not aware of the ability of the blind. Too long has the appeal gone out for help for the "helpless blind," and too little has been said, nationally, about their abilities. Therefore, the necessity exists for careful and organised action in each factory to convince the staff at all levels of what a blind person can do. *Once a good blind worker has been placed in the right job then he will "sell himself or herself."* This has been proved, time and again, by the Section.

With these facts before us, we can see the picture of blind employment as it unfolds. The future is assured, if we act now. If we fail to act, then four years of solid hard work and effort by the blind themselves will have been wasted. The opportunity they have given us to build up on what they have done will be lost, and it will take years of slow, patient struggle, with probably little or no results to show for it, before we can again be in the position in which we find ourselves to-day.

Are we going to act or are we going to let things slide back to their pre-1939 condition?

The blind cannot undertake this constructive work on their own account. It is up to Blind Welfare to carve out the way for them.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

This Pity

SIR,—May I, as a sighted reader of your interesting paper, add my thoughts and impressions on the subject of "This Pity"?

Some years before we were married, my husband, in a fit of bitterness, flung at me the remark "I don't want your pity," a sentence that both startled and hurt, for I had no thought of pity. It set me thinking, and later I asked him whether he could do without my sympathy. He thought it over, and replied "No, Phyl, I need that." It took me some time to show him the difference between a sighted person's pity and sympathy.

If only other blind folk would also substitute the one word for the other, they would find a great deal of the hurt pride, annoyance, or

inferiority complex—or whatever they would call it—vanish.

I think I can honestly say that very few sighted people really "pity" anybody for the loss of a limb or sight or hearing, but they do wholeheartedly sympathise, especially with the blind, for it is so difficult for us to imagine ourselves going through life with our eyes shut. We can imagine just how helpless we would feel: I know, for I have tried to do jobs that my husband does with ease and find I can't, I must look. So that when we meet a blind person waiting to cross a road, or board a vehicle, we offer our help readily.

Admittedly we are often clumsy perhaps in our efforts, but have the folk that find us irksome ever thought how difficult it is to address another person in the street, especially

when that other person can't see, knowing they have no knowledge of your presence, that your voice may jar on their thoughts; in fact, that you have the advantage? Yet you don't know how your offer will be accepted, for you can't tell by a glance at a white stick whether the owner can see a little, or can't see at all, and there is always the chance that your offer of help may be refused, none too politely. I have been treated thus more than once.

So please, blind people, when you condemn us for being "stupid," etc., try to understand the position from our point of view, too, and in turn accept our sympathy in the way it is shown. You will find the world is very full of kindly people even as my husband does, from the little tot who pipes up "Come on, Guv'nor," to the elderly, tottery gentleman who accompanied him home last week after a Council meeting "because it's dark, my boy."

I often think the blind have a special passport to all men's friendship, if they will accept it, whereas we sighted folk are hedged in by our natural reticence.

Wishing the N.I.B. every success,

Yours, etc.,

PHYLLIS DUNWELL (Mrs.).

To the Editor.

The Deaf-Blind.

Sir.—An article of mine on the Deaf-Blind, in the November, 1944, issue of *THE NEW BEACON* aroused certain criticism that it unduly stressed the failures and rare types.

Admittedly such an article in the general press would have been unjust in view of the many admirable successes in our midst, but *THE NEW BEACON* is a specialist organ catering for the workers in this field, and as such I shared experiences with other Home Visitors, who, meeting all the failures and problem people in the homes, would probably agree that they are not so rare as my critics would suppose.

May I call the Home Visitor the first stepping stone over the handicap which some of our successful friends may have used in the past? But whereas they have mounted beyond her power, she remains in the same position for the support of the less fortunate, and the silent witness of the pathetic struggles of the failure.

I venture to say that she of all people knowing the facts has the most sincere respect for those who have triumphed, and will continue her function of stimulating others onward, even though she may pause occasionally to talk a few problems over with her colleagues.

Yours, etc.,

A. KEEBLE.

To the Editor.

A Letter of Thanks

SIR,—May I, through your columns, thank the many readers of *THE NEW BEACON* for their more than welcome letters, and assure them that their good wishes and kind expressions of goodwill mean a very great deal to me, and are deeply appreciated.

Yours, etc.,

OLIVE I. PRINCE.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the deaths of :—

Sir Edward T. Campbell, Bart, Conservative Member of Parliament for Bromley from 1930 until the recent dissolution. After some years in the Consular Service, Sir Edward Campbell returned home in 1920 and served for some time as a member of the L.C.C. He was keenly interested in work for the blind and was a Governor of the Royal Normal College for the Blind for more than twenty years. During the greater part of that time he was Vice-Chairman of the Board and succeeded the late Lord Lamington as Chairman in 1940. He often referred to the fact that he had been brought up in the interest of the College by his father, who had also been a Governor for many years. Sir Edward's wise counsel and genial personality will long be missed. Work in connection with youth also greatly interested him and he was President of the National Association of Boys' Clubs and Vice-President of the Kent Association of Boys' Clubs.

Reginald Edwin Everest, former member of the staff of the National Institute for the Blind, at the Hillingdon Cottage Hospital, Middlesex, after a lingering illness, aged 56. He was educated and trained as a pianoforte tuner at the Royal Normal College for the Blind and the Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead. In 1915 he entered the Music Transcribing Department of the N.I.B., proving himself an expert transcriber of the intricate and complicated system of Braille Music. His unassuming and gentle disposition endeared him to all his fellow-workers and it was a real grief to them when in 1940 he was compelled, owing to ill health, to relinquish his work. He possessed a good baritone voice, which he used more for the benefit of others than for self-advancement. As a pianist, he was no mean player.

A CHANCE TO CONSIDER AGAIN

IN the new Government the Ministers most directly concerned with Blind Welfare are Mr. Aneurin Bevan, Minister of Health, and Mr. George Isaacs, Minister of Labour. We wish them every success in the onerous tasks which confront them. The most immediate problems relative to the blind community which they will have to consider are those arising from the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act and those which will probably arise during the drafting of a Bill dealing with National Insurance which presumably the Government will shortly be introducing into Parliament.

The implementation of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act is now in progress, and the appointment of the new Ministers affords the Government a chance to consider again a number of knotty points which are causing alarm in Blind Welfare and which are dealt with in this issue by a blind contributor who writes under the name of Tiresias. Our contributor has made a careful study of the whole problem of Blind Employment as affected by the Act, and we hope to publish further articles by him on this subject and kindred matters.

A NEW PICTURE OF BLIND EMPLOYMENT

The most outstanding event in the contemporary history of Blind Welfare is the prompt and effective seizure by the blind of the opportunities for their employment in open industry afforded by war conditions of labour and production. Our readers are probably familiar with the details of this magnificent assault on the barriers of prejudice and ignorance which have hitherto almost totally prevented the blind from displaying their capabilities as economic workers in hundreds of different directions. But doubtless many who are aware of the facts have thought that the barriers will arise again when the war industries cease and when shortage of labour no longer forces the employers to go out into the fields and hedgerows to seek for workers. A reassuring answer to that rather obviously pessimistic point of view is provided by the facts and figures in the article on page 137 of this issue by Mr. E. W. Page, the Industrial Employment Officer of the National Institute for the Blind. Here are the views of an observer who does not speak from a facile optimism but from a wide experience of all aspects of the problems of Blind Employment. He has no shadow of doubt of the economic efficiency of blind workers in sighted factories under peace-time conditions provided both worker and job are properly selected; he expresses confidence in the present enlightened attitude of employers; and his main concern is the urgent necessity for an unprecedented national effort by Blind Welfare to consolidate and enlarge the positions gained by blind labour in economically productive industry. It is unlikely that the blind will ever again be given such a chance to prove their powers as that which the war has given them, and the whole future of the blind community depends on the ability of Blind Welfare to build now, on the solid foundations laid down by the blind workers themselves, a lasting and spacious structure of blind industrial employment.

We have recently had an opportunity of visiting several of the factories employing blind men and women, and we have come away with the impression that the influence of such employment on the outlook of blind people will be revolutionary. What most impressed us were three things—first, the ease and skill of the blind workers; second, their attitude towards their work; third, the attitude of their fellow-workers towards them. If you watch the way the blind worker tackles an operation, whether it is being done manually or mechanically, you will be convinced that here is a man who knows his job, who knows it so well that metaphorically as well as literally he can do it with his eyes shut. There is no fumbling, no awkwardness, no slurring; a slight defect in the result of an operation is at once detected and corrected. A blind worker's "inspection" is especially illuminative; it is as relentless as it is rapid. Then you cannot fail to notice the real satisfaction which this productive work is giving; it is the satisfaction of assured proprietorship of a capability—the capability of filling a bin with a good product, of discarding or remedying a bad product, of employing personal, independent judgment, of being the master of a machine. Finally, the attitude of the blind man's sighted fellow-workers strikes you. The blind man is one of them, a mate, arousing perhaps the extra friendliness of admiration but never the demonstration of an effusive superiority. In factories where they work the blind are safe from one of their biggest enemies—the patronage of pity.

THE EDITOR.

THE PRESENT PROBLEMS OF THE BLIND

I.—AWAKENING THE PUBLIC INTEREST

By TRITONE.

THE last of a former series of articles by me, published in *THE NEW BEACON*, having evoked a certain amount of comment, both favourable and the reverse, I propose in this further series to elaborate my argument that now is the time for a really big effort of an informative and educational nature, directed to the widest public in regard to the blind community.

I would therefore advance the opinion, for what it is worth, that it is a matter of urgency that in the many programmes now being advanced of social reconstruction and rehabilitation of the whole community, the special needs of the blind should be brought to the notice of those Government departments which are or may be directly responsible for the carrying out of these programmes in the matter of education, health, social welfare and so forth.

Much has been done for the blind in the past by various highly specialised bodies, and the wide knowledge and experience obtained thereby should not only be, as they are, at the disposal of such departments, but the departments in question made aware that such co-operation is vitally necessary if the interests of the blind are to be fully catered for—nay, more, that only in this way can the blind contribute to the building of a better world not only for themselves but for the community at large.

I think all this can best be achieved, in the first place, by a big propaganda drive through the medium of press and radio, so that the widest possible public may be aroused to something even greater than the sympathetic interest they have always displayed towards the blind. I am convinced that the nation, if it possesses full knowledge of the capabilities and aspirations of the blind and the present constitution of blind welfare, will help towards the development of the latter by direct expression of their opinion, both to local governing bodies and to Parliament, as to what part the blind are to play and can play in the building of the new and better world. Again, if the opinion of the blind themselves is to be fully voiced, I think it is essential that officials, both paid and voluntary, of existing organisations who come into direct contact with the blind, such as home visitors and workers at social centres, should themselves be brought

into a much closer contact than at present exists with all members of the governing and directing bodies of those organisations.

Among articles dealing with the blind in the February issue of *World Digest*, there is one with which I am not wholly disposed to agree, though there is much in it of constructive realism. A rather nice point is raised as to whether the blind are really deprived of one sense or not. In my opinion, we definitely are, and it is mere splitting of hairs to advance the theory that because that portion of the brain connected with the optic nerve is fully alive and aware, the blind are not deprived of a sense of sight. One might as well advance the argument that a camera, in which lens and diaphragm are operative but the shutter permanently fixed in a closed position, the rays of light therefore not reaching the plate or film, is a perfectly good and satisfactory camera. The hard fact remains that we are deprived of the sense of sight, and that only we who are in such a position can appreciate to the full the world of darkness in which we have to live, move and work.

During the years of the last war and those immediately subsequent, I came much in contact with blind people. At that time I was not only possessed of remarkably good sight, but totally unaware of the fact that I, myself, in the course of a very few years would enter into their world. Like most sighted people I sympathised and wished to help, and thought I understood. But now I know better. Sympathy and the desire to help are not enough, and all attempts at understanding merely through these emotions must of necessity fall short. In other words, only the blind themselves can appreciate their own needs, and it is they who must express them if they wish to realise completely their desire to be fully active and serviceable members of society, able to pull their whole weight for the general good.

It is not easy even for one like myself, who has enjoyed two-thirds of his life in full possession of sight, to explain to my sighted friends the world in which I now live. Though in no other respect do I wish to quote the parable of Lazarus and Dives, there is between us who are blind and the sighted world a great gulf fixed, which must be bridged. A great feat of mental and spiritual engineering has to be

undertaken, and speed is the essence of the contract if the blind of to-day are to reap that share of the benefits of an enlightened and progressive way of living which all would wish them to have, and to give of their best in helping to bring about that better and happier state to which the world so earnestly looks forward. That the blind can pull their weight, is, in my opinion, not hypothetical but axiomatic.

None the less, both these aspects must be driven home to those who have taken up the task of caring for the blind, to the nation as a whole, and not less to the blind themselves. Complacency and apathy of all alike, sighted or blind, must be brought to an end. Even the slightest slipping into or remaining in such an attitude of mind can and will tinge the whole outlook and effort, and act as a brake on progress, and such a state of affairs at such a time as this would be tragic. Ignorance must not be pleaded as the justification of inaction. It is up to us to give the nation the information that we may be sure would be welcome. Our special needs cannot be dealt with unless we ourselves make them known.

With this nation-wide, indeed world-wide, aspect of the problem of the community of the blind I hope to deal in later articles, but the crusade, for I regard it as such, must be initiated without delay.

I would suggest, I would insist, that the first step on this, to me, not merely desirable but most necessary road, is the representation of the rank and file of the blind on the governing and directing bodies of all societies having the welfare of the blind as their object. Certain of these societies have already blind members on their committees, and this excellent example must be followed by the remainder. This to my mind is vital. The presence of such representatives can and should be of the greatest possible assistance; their opinions on all problems presented to such directing bodies would be a great step in the bridging of that gulf which sympathy and interest alone can never bring. Here I would proffer the suggestion that these representatives should consist of those who have never known sight, and those, like in case as myself, and many others, who have known and worked in both conditions of sight and blindness. Some of the problems raised by these two different conditions of blindness must necessarily differ in many respects, and it appears to me essential that representatives of both types of blind people should be included in the governing bodies of every society working for the blind as a whole.

Again I would urge the necessity for a great

awakening of public interest in the special needs of the blind in rehabilitation and vocational training. Personally, though averse from any idea of the segregation of the blind, I am equally averse from an idea, which seems to me unduly prevalent, of the mere lumping together in the public or parliamentary mind of the blind with those disabled by limb injuries or other causes, and in the matter of education, especially child education, with the mentally deficient. Both these points have been very forcibly brought home to me quite recently by articles in the press and by radio broadcasts. This may be merely an unfortunate concatenation, but such expressions as "Special Schools for the mentally deficient and the blind" and "Special training in factory work for the disabled and the blind" are instances of what shows to my mind a lack of discriminating mentality.

It seems to me an outcome of muddled thinking to assume that those disabled by loss of or even injury to a limb fall into the same category with the blind. Artificial limbs and such like aids are possible, but no artificial eyes and no means of communicating with that particular region of the brain affected by the eye can be devised. We can only work by the adaptation of our other senses to fill in the deficiency, and it seems to me that my argument is supported by the very existence and work of special societies and institutions already devoted entirely to the welfare of the blind, not merely and generally to the disabled.

Though splendid work has already been done in the arousing of public interest in the blind by the great societies dealing with their welfare, such interest, I think, needs constant renewal and increasing to the point at which every man, woman and child enjoying the blessing of sight is aware of the difficulties and indeed—I speak from experience—prejudices that still lie in the path of the blind who desire to live a full life and serve the community to the utmost of their ability. To this end the governing bodies of such societies should get into the closest possible touch with the blind, obtain their opinion, seek and listen to their advice, and, in short, paradoxical as it may appear, permit the blind to open the eyes of those who can see—above all, to the similarities and differences between the blind and themselves.

The world is changing about us from day to day, almost from hour to hour, and events march rapidly. Already the air is full of ideas and plans for the future of communities and nations, for the re-making of a world of peace and prosperity. If the blind, not only of this nation but of the world, are to find their rightful

place in this "brave new world" of the future, and to participate, as it should be made possible for them to do, to the fullest of their powers, as well of their needs, those responsible for this great refashioning should be aroused to an effort commensurate with the opportunity, and immediately. Great efforts for the blind and by the blind have been made in the past, but to-day the efforts must be more than redoubled.

At the risk of banality, let me urge the accelerated tempo of life and the shrinkage of distance brought about by modern invention. Science even predicts that the acceleration will be even greater and the annihilation of space and distance will correspond. We, in common with

the rest, must move faster physically and intellectually, and act with swift decision preceded by clear and concise thought; in brief, we must move with the times and in the spirit not of the present moment but of the future age. Not only we blind but the others. And I greatly fear, and indeed know, that far too many of our fellow countrymen are, despite all that has yet been done, still living in the days when basket weaving, mat and brush making, and sometimes piano tuning—provided there were not too many china ornaments and photograph frames littering the top of this musical instrument—were considered the only occupation of which the minds of the blind were capable.

BLIND OUTLOOK

Under this heading each month, we propose to give extracts from letters appearing in the Braille journal "Progress." Letters are received from all parts of the world and throw a most interesting light on current thought and opinion in the blind-community.

Poultry Keeping for Pleasure and Profit.

"... I have kept poultry on a small scale for about 15 years and a few rabbits for about 4 years. The latter were brought here by a boy evacuee who did not look after them and I meant to get rid of them, but found them so easy to look after and interesting to my young daughter and myself that I kept them on, and as they breed quickly I soon found them very useful to eke out the meat ration.

If some kind of Association can be formed to help us with advice and equipment I shall certainly be one of the first to join up, and after reading Mr. Dorgan's letter on his beautiful chinchillas I hope to attend the first Annual Meeting of blind livestock keepers wearing a fur coat produced by my own stock, because if he can do it, why not others? I have not yet thought of keeping a pig or a goat, but later on I hope to get another blind person to go shares with me, and then there's no knowing what heights we may attain to in the small stock-keeping world."—V. L. S. (Mrs.), OXFORD.

A Full Life at 74.

(This correspondent is 74 years old).

"... I keep fit and am at my garden nearly every day. I have had a hard time with the weeds this year; it has been a job to eradicate them and still they come. I am getting up new potatoes, the broad beans are satisfactory and my rose trees are producing well. I evolved a new method of planting spuds this year. I dug a narrow wedge-shaped hole with a spade and after putting in the spud I drew back the earth with the spade. This idea was to avoid kneeling with a trowel, as this was bad for the trouser knees. It has worked very well as it left a

ridge of earth which I could easily feel and which did for earthing up—*experientia docet*. Our little terrier has produced six fine black and white pups. I am very fond of dogs, they are more human than many humans. I continue to get much enjoyment from my talking book machine—I have lately had good books by Gibbs and Galsworthy. And I still read Moon books."—R. J. T., ST. ANNE'S

Homes for the Blind versus Lodgings.—

"... Through the kindness of my Home Teacher I was able to spend a very enjoyable fortnight's holiday at one of the National Institute for the Blind's homes on the north-east coast. I discovered the other blind people to be very sociable and I soon became quite at home with every one there. The home has a very nice spacious lounge with every comfort, radio, braille bookcase. The meals were beyond praise. In the basement is the smoke room in which are easy chairs, radio, dominoes and other games. Close at hand are the sheltered gardens where you can spend a very enjoyable time. Every Wednesday evening the superintendent gives a two-hour concert of gramophone records.

Now a little about private lodgings. I know of a good many places where afflicted people are given a dog's life. A man is expected to be in only for meals during the day, wet or fine; a lady may be barred from having her friend to tea. If they should become ill, woe betide them! Many have had to go into work-house infirmaries or other similar institution. I can honestly say if ever I found myself in similar circumstances and had the same chance to go into one of the National Institute for the Blind's homes I would not hesitate."—H. S., ILKLEY.

PERSONALIA

CAPTAIN E. O. BROADLEY, D.S.O., R.N., retired, has been appointed General Secretary of the Greater London Fund for the Blind in succession to MAJOR E. J. CASTELLO, M.C.

MAJOR CASTELLO, who was Secretary of the Fund from 1932 until 1939, was formerly on the staff of the G.W.B.; he was awarded a M.C. in the 1914-1918 war and, being on the reserve of Officers, was called up in 1939. He got safely through the perils of Dunkirk and elsewhere, but did not wish to return to the G.L.F., as he had other plans in view.

MISS DORIS SINCLAIR, formerly Assistant Secretary, has been warmly thanked by the Committee for carrying on in charge of the Fund through the difficult and dangerous years of the war. She has been appointed Deputy Secretary to the G.L.F.

* * *

MISS S. M. G. GASTER, Organising Secretary, Warwickshire Association for the Blind, has relinquished that post to take up Blind Welfare work in Iran. At the moment little is being done there. A small school for the blind was started in Ispahan by a German doctor who was interned during the war. The Church Missionary Society managed to hold the threads together, but Miss Gaster will have to start again from rock bottom. As announced in THE NEW BEACON last month, the National Institute for the Blind has made an annual grant for three years towards the cost of conducting the school.

That Miss Gaster is eminently suitable for this pioneer work is proved by her past career. She was appointed as the Warwickshire Association's Home Teacher and County Supervisor in 1931, and as Organising Secretary in 1942. The invaluable activities begun by Miss Gaster for the benefit of the Blind include Cookery Classes, Keep-Fit Classes and Social Centres, and the crown of her work was the opening of the Tower House Hostel for Blind Working Girls at Hillmorton.

At the Annual Meeting of the Association the President handed her a cheque for £62. 9s. 6d. contributed by blind people and friends.

There is a possibility that someone else with experience in Blind Welfare will have to be appointed to help Miss Gaster in the onerous task she has now undertaken.

* * *

MISS MARION CROSSLEY has been appointed Organising Secretary of the Warwickshire

Association for the Blind in succession to Miss Gaster.

* * *

DR. EDWARD E. ALLEN, Director-Emeritus of Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind, Watertown, Mass., U.S.A., has been presented with the Shotwell Memorial Award—a gold medal presented by Robert I. Bramhall, formerly Director of the Division of the Blind—in recognition of his sixty years' of leadership in the field of the Blind—as leader at Perkins, Principal and rebuilder of Overbrook, and finally Director and rebuilder of Perkins.

* * *

The Leslie Dana Gold Medal, awarded annually in the United States of America for outstanding achievements in the prevention of blindness and the conservation of vision, will be presented this year to DR. WILLIAM ZENTMAYER, of Philadelphia. Despite his 80 years, he is in active practice as an ophthalmologist and is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. He was formerly President of the American Ophthalmological Society.

* * *

The Migel Medal awarded annually by the American Foundation for the Blind "for outstanding services to the blind" has been conferred upon MR. J. E. CURTIS, a former supervisor of classes for the blind in schools for seeing children in Chicago. He is an authority on the Braille mathematical code and keenly interested in all educational apparatus.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Court Grange, Abbotskerswell.—The following successes in the recent examinations of the Associated Board of Music are reported from this school:—

CHOIR: GRADE IV (Credit).

PIANO PRELIM:
Asherwood, N.
Sparkes, H.

SOLO SINGING; GRADE IV:

Rose, S.
Cross, B. (Credit).
Sparkes, H. (Credit).
Asherwood, N. (Distinction).

Inspiration of a Pupil's Success.—The success of Hugh Farquharson, a former pupil of the Royal Blind School, Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh, who had recently graduated M.A., was commented on at the School's annual concert and prize distribution last month. His success was an inspiration to the other pupils, said Mr. John Gavin, who presided.

A Grand Boy.—Last October a flying bomb crashed near a house at Hatfield and almost reduced it to rubble. David Wilson, 13, and his brother Tony, 11, freed their mother who had been pinned down by a heavy beam but when, after their gallant efforts, a nurse carried David from the house he said: "Put me down, I am too heavy for you, though it is so dark that you must lead me to the ambulance." He had been blinded and will never see again.

Both boys were Boy Scouts, and last month both were awarded the Scouts' Gilt Cross for Gallantry.

To David the shock of his blindness was aggravated by his grief at the loss of his baby brother who was blown out of his arms and killed. But with splendid courage he soon responded to the loving care and experience which guided him into his new way of life at America Lodge, Torquay, one of the National Institute's Homes of Recovery, and a recent report on him is: "A grand boy. He is making good progress with his work. He is very keen on handwork, especially pottery, and is now quite ready for school." Since then he has proceeded to the Glamorgan Institution's School for the Blind at Bridgend.

Award for Literary Excellence.—The Helen Keller Gold Medal for Literary Excellence, offered by the Jewish Braille Institute of America, has been awarded to Miss Albertina Eastman, teacher of speech correction at Perkins Institution, Watertown, Mass. She was also awarded first prize in the Poetry Literary Competition of the Jewish Braille Institute for her poem entitled "The Need of Beauty."

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home

Hepburn Starey Blind Aid Society.—Some Annual Reports, by no means the best produced or most pretentious, are always a pleasure to read, because running through them there is a note of real concern for the blind persons helped. This is markedly the case with that of the Hepburn Starey Society. It is alive with warmth and sympathy. Here is a typical extract from the Report just issued, descriptive of a Blind Social held during an air-raid:—"Following the wail of the siren and the roar of the guns, Lady Arrol (the Hon. Secretary) and Miss Maud Robertson got down from the platform and, clearing away the seats, following

in single file with hands on shoulders, stamping and clapping at the appropriate places, led the entire company in a triumphant march round the hall to the strains of the Lambeth Walk." Stories like this make London deserve the title of the Proud City. Alas, since then, the Hall in which the Society held its Socials has been destroyed by a rocket-bomb, but a new and convenient meeting place has been found at the Welsh Baptist Chapel, 30, East Castle Street, W.1, not far away; and the Thursday afternoons which have for so many years given pleasure to the elderly blind of Central London have been resumed.

Foreign

The Central Association for the Blind in Lausanne.—This Association has recently celebrated its Centenary. Its report for 1944 shows that although, owing to war difficulties, subscriptions fell heavily and legacies went down by as much as 80 per cent., a special appeal made up most of the loss, and no application for help was denied, even though it meant that the organisation felt bound to exceed its income in meeting the many claims upon its funds. An interesting note is given on the work done in a Mental Home; a 45-year-old deaf-blind man was taught to read Braille, and his mental improvement was so marked that an effort has now been made with three other somewhat similar cases.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BRaille MUSIC.

The prices given are net.

Dances.

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----|
| 19295 | Gilbert, J., and Ilda, L.—Waiting in Sweetheart Valley, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. | 6d. |
| 19296 | Mizzy, V.—My Dreams Are Getting Better all the Time, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. | 6d. |
| 19297 | Porter, C.—Don't Fence Me In, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> | 6d. |
| 19298 | Sanders, J.—Pablo the Dreamer, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> | 6d. |

BRaille BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and blind individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covers.

Autobiography:

Those Days, by E. C. Bentley. A witty and attractive picture of the period from the 'eighties to 1914 by the inventor of "clerihews" and author of "Trent's Last Case," vividly recalling the social, political and journalistic life of those days and "featuring" such celebrities as G. K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, George Cadbury, H. W. Nevins.

and F. E. Smith. 4 vols. (18201-4). 6s. per vol. F240.

Fiction:

The Silver Darlings, by Neil M. Gunn. This fine novel constitutes an exhaustive study of the lives of the men and women in the herring fisheries on the Moray Firth at the end of the Napoleonic era. 7 vols. (18753-9). 6s. 6d. per vol. F453.

APPARATUS

The prices of the undermentioned articles are increased as from 2nd August:—

Cat. No.	Article.	List Price.	Special Price to the Blind.
9361	Rule 24" Steel Folding (4 sections)	6s.	3s.
9194	Venetian Writing Frame	3s. 9d.	2s. 6d.

The Game of Reversi.

Several months ago a few sample sets of the game of Reversi were sent out on trial. It was generally agreed that deeper holes in the board would effect a great improvement, and to remedy the defect thicker material was required. After some delay this was obtained, and the game is now on sale and should prove a useful addition to the various games sold by the National Institute. The price is as follows: list price, 8/-; special price to blind individuals in the British Empire if for own personal use, 5/9. The catalogue number is 9434.

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND,
35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1, and
Northern Branch,
5, St. John Street, Manchester, 3.

ADDITIONS.

Fiction:	Vols.
Barne, Kitty. While the Music Lasted ..	4
Baum, Vicki. Once in Vienna ..	4
Ferguson, Rachel. Evenfield ..	5
Ferguson, Rachel. Late Widow Twankey ..	4
Freeman, R. Austin. Cat's Eye ..	5
Kaye-Smith, Sheila. Tambourine, Trumpet and Drum ..	7
Knight, Brigid. Covenant (South Africa) ..	6
Laverty, Maura. Alone We Embark ..	4
Lawford, Florence. Daffodil Terrace ..	5
Lindsay, Jack. We Shall Return: A Novel of Dunkirk ..	6
Martyr Weston. Pipe Pushers, and Other Stories ..	9
Pertwee, Roland. Fish Are Such Liars (Short Stories) ..	11
Owen, John. Blitz Hero ..	5
Postgate, Raymond (compiler). Detective Stories of To-day ..	7
Preedy, George R. Lady in a Veil ..	7
Roberts, Cecil. So Immortal a Flower ..	5
Rushton, Charles. Murder on Trust ..	3
Weston, Christine. Indigo (India) ..	6
Wilkins, Vaughan. Being Met Together ..	11

Religion:

Everest, E. E. Finding a Soul: A Spiritual Biography ..	2
Hogg, C. F., and Watson, J. B. Promise of His Coming ..	2
Kellett, E. B. Short History of Religions ..	12
St. Francis de Sales. St. Francis de Sales in His Letters (edited by the Sisters of the Visitation) ..	5

Missions:

Hodge, J. Z. Salute to India ..	2
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Sociology:

Macadam, Elizabeth. Social Servant in the Making ..	2
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Language—English:

Brown, Ivor. Just Another Word ..	2
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Fine Arts:

Blom, Eric. Music in England ..	5
Seyler, Athene, and Haggard, Stephen. Craft of Comedy ..	2

Prose Literature:

Elton, Oliver. Dickens and Thackeray ..	2
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History:

Woodward, E. L. British Historians ..	1
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War, 1939:

Klein, Catherine. Escape from Berlin ..	4
Seaven, Michael. Hell and High Altitude ..	3

Biography:

Green, Julian. Memories of Happy Days ..	4
Haggard, Stephen. I'll Go to Bed at Noon ..	2
Higham, Florence M. G. Lord Shaftesbury: A Portrait ..	2
Underhill, Evelyn. Letters of Evelyn Underhill (edited with an introduction by Charles Williams) ..	7

Juvenile:

Barne, Kitty. Family Footlights ..	3
Boylston, Helen Dore. Carol Goes on the Stage ..	3
Tompkins, Jane. Storks Fly Home ..	1

Grade 1:

Bridges, Victor. Seven Stars ..	5
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ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

Lessons given in Dietetics by correspondence. For particulars apply to Robert Malton, 18, Claremont Road, Folkestone.

Gentlewoman, musical, would like to help cultured blind person a few hours daily in exchange for unfurnished Bed Sitting-Room. Not as family. D.E. c/o Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

MALE ATTENDANT, ASSISTANT NURSE AND DOMESTIC HELP, wanted for Home for the Blind, Torr House, Plymouth. Apply, The Matron, Leigh Court, Angersleigh, Taunton.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All home teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.

HOME TEACHERS' EXAMINATION, 1946. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

Applications are invited for the position of **SIGHTED FEMALE HOME TEACHER** for the Blind in the Newcastle and Gateshead Districts.

Write stating age, experience, whether certified or probationer, salary, etc., with copies of two testimonials, to Mrs. D. M. Strong, Acting Secretary, Home Teaching Society for the Blind, The Sutherland Memorial Hall, Jesmond Rd., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND
HOME INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT, REIGATE.**

Applications are invited for the post of **Visiting Supervisor of Home Workers** engaged in Round Machine Knitting. Applicants must be thoroughly conversant with Round Machine Knitting. Commencing salary £208 per annum. Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, should be addressed to Manager, Home Industries Dept., 31, Holmesdale Road, Reigate, Surrey.

BASKET FOREMAN required; must be fully experienced in making all types of baskets and must have the necessary qualifications and experience for organising and supervising the department. Salary £260 per annum, plus Bonus (at present 23s. per week). The successful candidate will be required to contribute to the Institute's Superannuation Scheme. Applications, accompanied by two recent testimonials, stating age, experience and qualifications, to be sent to the Secretary, Hull & East Riding Institute for the Blind, Beech Holme, Beverley Road, Hull.

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Applications are invited for the position of **Sighted Female Home Teacher** at a commencing salary (if certificated) of £180 per annum, plus bonus, rising by annual increments of £10 to £200 per annum, plus bonus. The position is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

The successful applicant will be required to take up residence in or near the city of Worcester and must be able or willing to learn to drive a car which will be provided.

Applications, with copies of testimonials, stating age, experience and qualifications should reach the undersigned not later than the 8th September, 1945.

W. R. SCURFIELD,
Clerk of the Council.

Shirehall, Worcester.

**LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.
APPOINTMENT OF HOME TEACHER OF THE
BLIND.**

Applications are invited for the position of **Sighted Female Home Teacher of the Blind**, for duty in the Administrative County Area adjacent to Bolton. Previous experience in Blind Welfare an advantage but not essential. Salary according to experience and qualifications, rising to a maximum of £208 per annum plus war bonus, at present £48 per annum, plus travelling expenses. The position will be superannuable.

Applications in applicant's own handwriting, accompanied by copies of not more than two recent testimonials, stating age, experience and qualifications, must be received by the County Medical Officer of Health, County Offices, Preston, not later than Monday, 27th August, 1945.

R. H. ADCOCK,
Clerk of the County Council.
County Offices, Preston.

SIGHTED FEMALE HOME TEACHER FOR BIRMINGHAM AREA. State age and experience. College of Teachers of the Blind Diploma, and three recent testimonials required. Salary £180 to £250 per annum, according to experience, plus cost of living bonus. Apply Secretary, Blind Institution, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17.

**COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING.
BLIND PERSONS ACT, 1920.
APPOINTMENT OF HOME TEACHER AND
SUPERVISOR.**

Applications are invited for the post of a **Female (Sighted) Home Teacher and Visitor** of blind persons and **Supervisor** of the Blind Home Workers in Reading, at a salary at the rate of £183 per annum, rising, subject to satisfactory service, by annual increments of £13 to £209 per annum (the maximum salary of the post) together with a cost of living bonus, at present at the rate of 18s. 6d. per week.

Applicants must have some knowledge of handicrafts suitable for blind persons, of home workers' trades and of Braille, as well as an ability to teach.

The appointment will be made subject to termination by one month's notice on either side and to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Every application must be in the candidate's own handwriting, stating age, experience and qualifications, and date when services would be available, and must be accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, and be delivered to me, endorsed "Home Teacher and Supervisor," not later than Friday, 31st instant.

G. F. DARLOW,
Town Clerk.

Town Hall, Reading.
14th August, 1945.

**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLACKPOOL.
Appointment of Manager and Financial Organiser to the
Blackpool and Fylde Society for the Blind.**

Applications are invited for the position of **Manager and Financial Organiser** to the Blackpool and Fylde Society for the Blind at a salary of £450 per annum rising, subject to approved service, by two annual increments of £25 to £500 per annum plus cost-of-living bonus (at present 23s. 6d. per week).

Applicants should preferably be under 50 years of age. Applicants should preferably possess the necessary experience in blind welfare work and of blind workshop management.

The position is a designated post under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the selected candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

The person appointed will be required to enter into an Agreement of Service.

Applications are to be made on a form to be obtained from the Town Clerk, Municipal Buildings, Blackpool, and are to be returned to the undersigned endorsed "Manager and Financial Organiser" not later than Saturday, the 29th September, 1945.

Canvassing will be deemed an absolute disqualification.

TREVOR T. JONES,
Town Clerk.

Municipal Buildings,
Blackpool.
9th August, 1945.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

VOL. XXIX. No. 345.

SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1945.

PRICE 3d.

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THE BLIND IN MID-VICTORIAN TIMES

By W. McG. EAGAR

HENRY MAYHEW was a remarkable man who, in a life which extended from 1812 to 1887, wrote plays, managed theatres, edited periodicals, originated "Punch" and "invented philanthropic journalism," as the Dictionary of National Biography puts it. In that latter capacity he published in 1861 "London Labour and the London Poor," the legitimate ancestor of Booth's "Life and Labour in London" (1902) and its sequel "London Life and Labour," produced by the London School of Economics in 1930.

For some years I have possessed the fourth volume of Mayhew's great work, which, in more squeamish days, was classified as "curious" inasmuch as it is a close-up study of "the vice of the great metropolis." Recently, by a lucky chance, I found the first three volumes to add to my collection of books on London and Londoners, and I found that they contain much first-hand and first-rate material on the condition of the blind at the date of publication, to which apparently no reference has been made in any books on Blind Welfare.

"London Labour and the London Poor" is a good deal more than philanthropic journalism. It is a detailed study of street sellers, street buyers, street performers, street labourers, and all the other wandering tribes of mid-Victorian city life. It is all very solid, very factual and convincingly human, because Mayhew had a rare gift of interviewing. He must also have had great facility in shorthand and a marvellous memory.

His readers meet the blind of his day in a dozen or more of his long series of personal histories. There is a blind street-seller of boot-laces, another of "small wares," i.e., cotton-tapes, pins, sewing cotton and shirt buttons, and another who sold tailors' needles to the trade. There is a blind man who read in public the Gospels in Mr. Frere's system, the books having been given him by "The Society for the Indigent Blind"; a performer on the bells, a 'cello player, an Irish piper, a violinist, and, less legitimate as a musician, a blind man who imitated all the animals of the farmyard on the fiddle. The stories are outstandingly real. They cover the cause of the blindness and the history of the person before and after the loss of sight; they illumine the status, occupations and earnings of blind people long before the Blind Persons Act was placed on the Statute Book; they deal objectively and at some length with such "modern" subjects as the dreams of the blind, the sense of obstacles, colour-appreciation and guide-dogs. Between them they constitute a general picture

of the condition of the blind in early- to mid-Victorian times such as is not, so far as I know, presented anywhere else.

Within the scope of this article only a few points can be touched on to illustrate the historical value of the material.

Mayhew's small-wares seller told him that, when she first "went dark," she was forced on her parish, which gave her 6d. twice a week, and a half-quartern loaf; that was allowed only for three weeks and "then there was only the House for me." She was at first frightened and nervous of every noise: "If you lose your sight as I did, Sir, when you are not young, it is a long time *before you learn to be blind*" (so she very expressly worded it). "...A friend advised me to sell tapes and cottons and boot-laces in the street, as better than doing nothing, and so I did." So the phrase "learn to be blind" dates much farther back than Sir Arthur Pearson, to whom it is usually credited.

The police were down on the street-trader for exhibiting a card "PLEASE TO BUY OF THE POOR BLIND." She made, on the average, not more than 6d. a day, and lived with another woman specialising in boot- and stay-laces, in telling whose story Mayhew gives a general disquisition on the treatment of the blind who, he says, "have a right to ask charity of those whom God has spared so terrible an affliction." On that he quotes Stuart Mill. On the other hand, he refers to one blind man who when Mr. Child, the oculist, offered to couch him, replied: "Why, that would ruin me." In total, Mayhew concluded that there were, at the time of his inquiry, at least 100 blind men and women getting their living in the London streets. Some were wheel-turners for French-polishers and cutlers; some blew blacksmiths' forges. Others turned mangles—a poor job; some chopped chaff for horses.

"Many of the blind," reports Mayhew, "are basket-makers, learning the business at the blind school, but one half, I am told, can't make a living at this, after leaving the school; they can't do the work so neatly, and waste more rods than the other workers.* Other blind

* One of the people interviewed said: "The blind are forced to the streets because, they say, they can do nothing else to get a living... They are not qualified to work against those who can see; and what's more, labourer's wages are so low that people can get a man with his eyesight at the same price... There's many a blind basket-weaver playing music in the streets 'cause he can't get work. At the trade I know one blind basket-maker makes 15s. a week at his trade. Then he has a good connection and works for himself; the work all comes home. He couldn't make half that working for a shop."

people are chair-bottomers, and others make rope mats with a frame, but all of these can scarcely make a living. Many blind people play church organs. Some blind men are shoe-makers, but their work is so inferior it is almost impossible to live by it."

The largest single occupational group were the musicians. There were seven blind musicians all playing through the streets together in one band. They had a good reputation for sobriety, despite the fact that they were often treated at taverns and brought there by drunken men to play to them; but one man who was repeatedly intoxicated damaged the reputation of others. "Some years ago," one of Mayhew's blind musicians told him, "the street blind tried to maintain a burying and sick club of our own." It had only a dozen members; two basket-makers, one mat-maker, and four violin players among them. That dropped through for want of funds. The contribution was one shilling a month; sickness benefit was 5s. a week after two years' contributions.

The total number of blind within five miles of St. Paul's was calculated to be 5,000. The majority had lost their sight from smallpox, but since vaccination had been discovered that cause had become considerably less important. The great majority had not been trained to any employment. There was a strong Freemasonry of the blind. When one blind person was told by his guide that another blind person was at hand they always spoke, giving their names and particulars, and asking as the "most particular question of all: 'Do you belong to any of the institutions?'" The usual meeting place was at "the houses of gentlemen when we goes for our pensions." A peculiarly timely point is that "during all the war (the Crimean War presumably) the blind got money in handfuls... Money was of no value scarcely; you could get nothing for it almost; but now if you get a little you can buy plenty with it." That is said in particular relation to begging, and Mayhew gives *verbatim* the "Lamentation," which was the stock appeal, pattered by blind beggars with little variation: "Some say 'Pity the poor blind,' but the Lamentation is better. It's a very feeling thing. Many people stand still and hears it right through and gives a ha'penny. I'd give one myself any day to hear it well said. I'm sure the first time I heard it the very flesh crept on my bones. I larnt it to one blind man myself last summer."

The "Lamentation" is pitiful doggerel—pitiful in every sense—too humiliating to us nowadays to bear reproduction in THE NEW BEACON. But the term "pensions" requires

notice, because in mid-Victorian times it meant something very different from what it means to us. It meant periodical gifts by individuals to individuals, though there is a reference also to blind people going to the Cloth Hall to get their quarter's money—25s. One of Mayhew's informants said that he "got £5 from Cloth Hall, besides a small pension of 1s. and 2s. 6d. and 5s. a year from different gentlemen who allows us poor blind a small pension yearly. There are many gentlemen do this at the West End. Some will allow 10s. a year, and some only 1s. a year, to a stated number; and they all pay on a particular day that they may appoint." He goes on to give names, e.g., the Earl of Mansfield, 10s. 6d. a year to 24 destitute blind people; the Baroness Rothschild, 5s. apiece once a year to 70 or 80. There is a long list of others, whose benevolence ranged from the Bishop of London, who gave 5s. to everyone who could obtain a minister's signature, to Lady Otway Cave, who gave "70 or 80 of us 1s. each every fust of May; but the butler... takes advantage of the blind, puts them off with 6d. and takes the receipt from them for 1s." "If it wasn't for the pensions that the quality gives to the blind during the winter they couldn't do at all." All the generosity came from the West End; not one person living east of Tottenham Court Road gave any pensions.

Altogether, Mayhew is a find for anyone who is interested in the social history of our people, and particularly in that part of it which is our special concern. Whoever undertakes a well-studied history of Blind Welfare—which is long overdue, though Mr. Wagg's *Chronology* is a most valuable contribution towards it—will use Mayhew as a most serviceable quarry. A second article will give further extracts, as "London Labour and the London Poor" is not easy to come by.

This first note is intended to call attention to what appears to be an unused source of information; it may possibly prove that impression wrong. It may also bring other material to light. Does any reader of THE NEW BEACON know of any other studies, local or national in scope, of the condition of the blind in the 19th century? I would be grateful for any references.

NOTE BY MISS M. G. THOMAS

It seems strange that none of us have happened on Mayhew's material before. Why were our grandparents allergic to people who turned wheels or mangles? Nobody could have a Hetherington pension who lived "by turning a mangle, a polisher's wheel, or other like employment." It seems curious.—M.G.T.

HOME NEWS

Northern Counties Association for the Blind.—The Annual Meeting of the General Council met on 27th June at Carlisle, under the chairmanship of Coun. Mrs. Chambers. During the morning session, the main subjects discussed were the placement of the blind in open industry and the need for additional Homes; in the afternoon the meeting considered the possibilities of a handicap allowance as part of a scheme of National Insurance, and then devoted a considerable time to the proposal of a member of the National League of the Blind, asking for direct representation on the Association's Executive, a motion that was eventually lost by a very narrow majority (22 votes to 25). The draft scheme for Recruitment and Training of Home Teachers, presented by Mr. Kershaw, was then considered; it included two important features—that trainees would in future be under the control of the Association, and that during the period of training they should receive a grant of £100 per annum towards

their expenses. It was agreed that the discussion of the scheme should be deferred until the next Council meeting, and that in the meantime Local Authorities should be asked to forward their observations to the Secretary.

Worthing Town Council and a Home for the Blind.—An appeal by the Metropolitan Society for the Blind against the decision of the Worthing Town Council that the use of a house on the Marine Parade as a Home for the Blind would contravene town planning, was recently heard. The Society, represented by Council, claimed that the Worthing Corporation had misunderstood the nature of the use to which the house was to be put; it was not to be an institution, but a guest house; to have it on the outskirts of the town would be to segregate the blind visitors, who liked to take part in the life about them. The Town Clerk in reply claimed that the property was in a busy traffic thoroughfare, and therefore unsuitable for the blind, and held that to establish a blind home there would

depreciate the value of adjoining property. So far the result of the inquiry has not been made public.

Evacuated Schools and Institutions Return.—The following movements have taken place recently :—

Birmingham Royal Institute for the Blind. The undermentioned Branches of the School are now at the following addresses :—

Kindergarten Branch at Lickey Grange, near Bromsgrove, Worcs; Senior Boys' and Senior Girls' School, at Carpenter Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 15.

Royal School of Industry for the Blind, evacuated to Templecombe House, hopes to be back at Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, at the end of the month.

Worcester College for the Blind.—At the Speech Day at the end of the summer term, the prizes were distributed by Mr. P. H. B. Lyon, headmaster of Rugby School, and Lord Cobham, Chairman of the Governors presided. It was the first Speech Day since 1939, and the headmaster, Mr. B. O. Bradnack, gave a review of the war years; of 52 boys entered for School Certificate 45 had been successful at the first attempt, and nine successes had been gained in Higher Certificate examinations out of 10 entrants. Swimming, rowing and chess continued to be absorbing out-of-school activities. The headmaster touched on two of the problems which caused the Governors some concern—that of careers and that of provision of books, and expressed appreciation of the services of voluntary readers who had promised to come in the evenings to read to the sixth form.

Portsmouth Voluntary Association.—The Association has commemorated VE and VJ days by a gift of £1 to each of the registered blind in the city, in appreciation of their courage and fortitude during the war.

Scientists and St. Dunstan's.—St Dunstan's has recently set up an important committee, to be known as the Sensory Device for the Blind Committee, under the Chairmanship of Professor E. D. Adrian of Cambridge, and including a number of eminent scientists; a Research Unit is to be set up, and a research physicist and a biologist appointed. It will investigate guiding devices for the blind (one method to be explored being analogous to Radar) and methods whereby the printed word in an ordinary book can be "read aloud" by the blind.

Leeds Rotary Club and a Holiday for the Blind.—At the May Conference of Home Teachers, arranged by the Northern Counties

Association, an interesting account was given of a holiday for the blind, made possible by the Leeds Rotary Club. Twelve blind men and eighteen women, carefully selected by the home teachers as people likely to be "good mixers" in a new experiment, accompanied by a few seeing members of the Rotary Club, the headmaster of a boys' school and four of his older boys, all stayed at the C.H.A. Guest House at Hope, in the Derbyshire Peak district. Other guests at the hostel were asked to share their holiday with the blind visitors, and proved most friendly and co-operative. Walks, sports, games and concerts filled the days, and the spirit of the holiday was summed up by one blind man of over 70 who said on the way home, that he had "never known that there were such goings on and such good people in the world."

Nottingham Blind Folks' Own Club.—Readers of the two articles on Social Clubs in this issue will be interested to know of another club run by the blind themselves; it is at Friar Lane, Nottingham, and was founded about three years ago by Mr. and Mrs. Blatherwick, who are both blind. It meets weekly for talks, games and music, and is entirely self-contained, the members contributing 2d. weekly.

Conference on Employment for the Blind.—"What is our Employment Policy?" That was one of ten fundamental questions put to a Conference convened by the Southern Regional Association at Denison House on July 10th by Mr. S. W. Starling, who moved the adoption of the memorandum "Five Ways to Employment for the Blind," a précis of which was given in the May issue of *THE NEW BEACON*. Seconding the motion, Mr. J. Chamberlain, Secretary of the Wolverhampton Institution for the Blind, said that he was proud to be associated with a document which he regarded as a most valuable contribution to blind welfare. He added that the policy recommended by the officials who drew up the memorandum was based, not on present conditions "when every workshop worthy of the name is busy and a large number of blind people are employed in sighted industry," but on normal times when employment in workshops "is not so good" and few blind people were employed in open industry.

A lively discussion followed in which a wide range of views were expressed. Some speakers advocated caution and took a pessimistic view of the opportunities for blind labour in peacetime industry. The majority recognised that in the new situation created by the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, a comprehensive

plan which will enable workshops to develop an effective variety of remunerative trades and will create a high-powered placement service, is an imperative necessity for Blind Welfare.

Summing up the discussion, Mr. W. McG. Eagar thanked the Southern Regional Association, on behalf of the signatories of the Memorandum, for holding the Conference and enabling a wide range of practical experience to be brought to bear on the crucial problems involved. The memorandum was then adopted unanimously.

M.Ps. Connected with National Blind Welfare.—National work for the blind is well represented in the present House of Commons. Sir Ian Fraser (Conservative), Mr. Clement Davies (Liberal), Mr. F. Messer (Labour), and the Hon. L. W. Joynson-Hicks (Conservative) are all members of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind, and Mr. Edward Evans (Labour) is the National Institute's Deputy Secretary.

Modernizing Braille Shorthand.—Last month a Conference, convened by the National Institute for the Blind, to modernize the Braille shorthand system met at Rowton Castle, Shrewsbury, through the hospitality of the Royal Normal College. Its members were practising blind stenographers and teachers from the schools in Great Britain where blind shorthand typists are trained. The Conference agreed that the present system of Braille shorthand, devised in 1910 and to some extent amended in 1934, is sound in principle, but must be expanded to meet modern office requirements.

Much valuable work has already been done on this problem by the teaching staff of the Royal Normal College, who, two years ago, devised an expanded shorthand system for their own pupils. Other schools have added their own contractions and abbreviations to the 1910 system, with the result that blind shorthand typists working in the same office, but trained at different schools, may not be able to read each other's notes. In the course of a busy weekend the Conference examined many different systems and agreed unanimously on a uniform system, which, though based on the principles adopted in 1910, contains a large number of new group signs, abbreviations and phrases.

This new system will be tried out, during the next two terms, at the Royal Normal College, Worcester College and Chorleywood College. Any ambiguities which are revealed in practice will be eliminated before the National Institute for the Blind prints the new system in substitution for its present shorthand primer. A book of exercises, based on current office practice, is also being prepared in the system.

Censorship.—The Control of Communications Order (No. 3) 1945, dated 26th July, 1945, made by the Minister of Information, has been revoked with effect on 25th August, 1945. Accordingly, the necessity for censorship has ceased to exist, and any matter of the kind to which the Censorship Permits refer should now be despatched in the normal way, and not in accordance with the requirements of the Censorship Permits.

Hostels for London's Homeless Blind.—Hostel accommodation is being provided for certain London homeless blind persons. "It is estimated," says the *Public Assistance Journal*, "that there may be as many as 125 London blind persons who have no families or friends to look after them and for whom accommodation will have to be found. In normal times blind persons requiring accommodation could usually secure admission to the homes managed by voluntary associations. The homes existing in London before the war have either been destroyed by enemy action or rendered uninhabitable, and such accommodation throughout the country is quite inadequate to cope with the present demand. There is, for example, a waiting list of some 40 London persons desiring admission to a home for the blind, apart from the homeless evacuees mentioned above.

"The only practicable immediate solution is the opening of temporary hostels for the blind. Responsibility for this rests with the Council as the Blind Welfare authority for the County of London. The Committee accordingly propose that, as a temporary measure and subject to periodical review, two such hostels should be opened in or near London, leaving the question of providing further accommodation to be considered in the light of experience.

"Of several premises which have been inspected, the Committee have provisionally approved for one hostel the use of Copley Dene (St. Mary's Choir School), Cholmeley Park, N.6. These premises were acquired by the Council for the erection of a nurses' home and the Hospitals and Medical Services Committee are prepared to agree to their temporary use as a hostel for the blind until they are required for hospital purposes. They will accommodate about 45 blind persons and six to eight resident staff. The cost of carrying out the necessary works of repair and adaptation and supplying furniture, etc., is estimated at £1,500.

"To meet the need caused by the closure of a hostel at Barmouth, which was used for the accommodation of a number of London blind evacuees, Copley Dene Hostel was opened on 26th June last for a small number of blind persons transferred from Barmouth who could not otherwise be rehoused."

East Suffolk County Association.—Sir Cecil Oakes, C.B.E., Clerk to the East Suffolk County Council, was principal guest at the annual meeting of the East Suffolk County Association for the Blind, and gave an informative speech on the future of Blind Welfare services. Speaking of the industrial employment of the blind, Sir Cecil said that the reluctance of the employers to engage blind persons had been broken down by the necessities of the case and there had been realisation that blind persons could adapt themselves to many of the requirements of modern industry. Those responsible for securing employment for suitable blind persons must not hesitate to approach employers and quote experiences, and he suggested that the Association should approach the East Suffolk County Council with a view to their endeavouring to find new trades for blind workers of a remunerative character which would assist adult blind persons to become self-supporting members of the community. Sir Cecil said that he had been perfectly astounded at the work done in the office by Mr. G. C. Hildebrand, who became blind in adult life, and was one of the most brilliant shorthand-typists he had seen.

Sir Cecil congratulated Miss Spooner, the Organising Secretary, on her firm and enlightened advocacy of the proposal to establish a Residential Home for Blind Persons at Felixstowe. Suitable premises had already been secured and two County Councils and two Associations were joined in partnership—East Suffolk would own the building, their Association was assisting to equip the Home, West Suffolk would be tenants of so many beds, and the two Associations would be represented on the governing body. It was a happy augury and he hoped it would not be long before the last vestige of Poor Law in relation to the administration of blind persons would be gone.

Saturday Evening Dances for the Blind.—Dances are being held by the Sports Club for the Blind in the Queen Mary Hall, Y.W.C.A. Headquarters, Gt. Russell St., Tottenham Court Rd., London, from now onwards on the first Saturday evening of each month, 7 to 10.30 p.m., up to and including May, 1946, with the exception that the date arranged for December is the 8th. For the facilities provided, the admission charge of 2s. is very low, and it is hoped that the functions will be fully attended. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. W. Kitchen, will be glad if new friends will ask for him on arrival so that they may be welcomed and ensured of a good evening. Many people hesitate to attend functions of this nature for fear that they will be left out in the cold. The Sports Club for the

Blind takes steps to see that this does not happen—so roll along, please!

With peace conditions it is hoped that the Club's activities suspended during the war will speedily be revived. In the meantime, all communications should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. W. Kitchen, 8, Strathmere Gardens, Finchley, N.3.

EMPIRE NEWS

Trachoma in Africa.—Speaking recently, Mr. R. W. Bowen, M.P., President of the National Council for the Blind in South Africa, said that "a scourge of blindness, in the form of trachoma," was surging down the African continent. The problem is assuming alarming proportions among the native population of the Union and also exists in Rhodesia. It has been suggested that the Order of St. John might sponsor an ophthalmic hospital and clinic in South Africa rather on the same lines as that which is so widely known in Jerusalem.

FOREIGN NEWS

Blindness from Six Miles Distance.—Dr. Donald Leet, Harvard geophysics professor and earthquake expert now in Manila, saw the first test explosion of the atom bomb in New Mexico. He revealed that the penalty for looking on the frightful sight with the naked eyes from a distance of six miles is blindness.

One man, at that distance away at the test, too curious and too unbelieving, disobeyed orders to wear a welder's mask with double-thick dark glass. His eyesight is gone.

R E C E N T P U B L I C A T I O N S

Worcester College Journal.

"The Pimpernel" (Worcester College for the Blind) is back in its pre-war glory of thick paper and beautiful print; the editor, who describes it as "decently printed," is surely over-modest. As always in school magazines, about half the copy is devoted to school activities, naturally more interesting to the initiated than the outsider, but there is a pleasant story of Miss Jones, of the India Coffee Marketing Board, who, rather exhausted after a day of lecturing, addressed the boys as "housewives," but redeemed a dull talk by giving each of her hearers a cup of Empire coffee at its close.

There is a short, but most sympathetic, appreciation of the late headmaster, Mr. G. C. Brown, whose "departures from the conventional and the orthodox were such as humanised him in the eyes of his little colony."

THE PRESENT PROBLEMS OF THE BLIND

II.—PROPAGANDA

By TRITONE

IT will, I think, be conceded that, in the light of experience of at least the past twelve years, propaganda is a tremendous weapon in the armoury of those who desire to influence public opinion for good or ill, and that such propaganda can best be carried on through the medium of the press and radio. Perhaps I should reverse these in the ratio of importance, since nowadays many who merely scan the newspapers and periodicals, have a wireless set. Nor should the medium of the camera be forgotten nor neglected.

We know, too, how, by direct impact or more subtle influence, the public mind can be swayed. As an example of the former, let us take advertisement hoardings and posters; of the latter, the talks which implanted the evils of which we reaped the painful results, and our counter propaganda.

We are aware that one notorious expert in broadcast propaganda believed that if a lie were only big enough and told sufficiently often and with sufficient emphasis, the public would accept it. The same is equally true in regard to the truth. It is also a truism that the propaganda must be carefully selected and be of the right brand, that is, the brand most calculated to effect the desired result. Over emphasis in the matter of the printed page or poster is emphatically of the wrong kind. Rudyard Kipling makes a character in one of his stories remark that too large a lettering fails to impress the retina, by reason of too heavy an impact. So with these postulates in mind let us for a little consider how best the public may have the case of the blind put before them by means of press, radio and film propaganda.

First, what kind of propaganda do we require? Personally I should say straightforward, truthful and entirely free from exaggeration in any direction. In the past I think too much of what we may call the emotional aspect has been stressed. This form of appeal was admirably satirised in Offenbach's short *operette bouffe* "The Two Blind Beggars," who (frauds both of them, of course) played for all they were worth not merely on the banjo and a trombone, but on what our old friend the village verger called the "nux vomica stop."

So let us get down to brass tacks and cut out any sentimental tosh. This, in my experience, does more harm than good. Nor do we need what

Kipling calls, in the same story from which I have already quoted, "arresting and dynamic tump." We blind do not want to be cried up as marvels, as something above the common herd. Nor do we want any song and dance made about a so-called independence which simply does not exist. We are all, blind or sighted, dependent on somebody for something; not one of us but needs help at some time or other; not one of us but who, at some time or another, helps or serves somebody else. We are all, or should be, the servants of each other, paid or unpaid, from His Majesty the King down to the humblest of his subjects.

No, what is needed, in my opinion, is a plain statement of facts as to what has been done for the blind, and by the blind in the past: what needs doing in the present and what could be done in the future for and by the blind, given the means and the right opportunity. This is the campaign which I should like to see launched on the public, and as a preliminary thereto, a National Conference on the grand scale convened, of proprietors and editors of newspapers and periodicals great and small, of representatives of the British Broadcasting Corporation, of representatives of societies dealing with the blind, and of blind persons from every walk of life. The outcome of this conference should be a definite plan to be carried out over a given term of weeks or months by means of articles, informative and otherwise, even entertaining and amusing; by the exhibition of informative films on the subject of the blind and their achievements. Cinemas all over the country could show films on the subject—"shorts" on the lines of those made by the Ministry of Information, and longer "documentaries" dealing with the many-sided activities of such societies as the National Institute for the Blind, and of the careers of the blind who have distinguished themselves in the world's affairs, and so on. Propaganda by radio should be carried on in the same way.

Ever since the coming of broadcasting enormous opportunities of bringing forward the needs and achievements of the blind have been lost, not, I am certain, from any lack of good will on the part of the governing body of the Corporation, but, I think, through lack of understanding.

From the very early days I have been a constant listener to every conceivable

variety of programme. Almost every type, stratum of society, trade, profession, have been represented in talks, discussions, causeries, debates, about every subject under the sun but that of the blind—with the one great exception of the annual Christmas appeal for Wireless for the Blind; the help this has been to the blind is beyond all thanks.

But I am not speaking of anything at present but the putting of the case for the blind before the public. It may be said that all broadcast programmes are of general interest to the blind. Quite true. But what of the particular interest?

I look back to a Sunday afternoon in the early Savoy Hill days when there were assembled in the studio a few blind people, among them Ronald Gourley and Sinclair Logan, to provide an hour's entertainment for the general listener. But that is the only programme I can recollect as such. Ronald Gourley, Sinclair Logan and Edward Isaacs have been frequent broadcasters, and some years ago compositions by Herbert Ferrers were given in broadcast programmes under his own direction. I do not, however, remember any blind person serving on a Brains Trust, taking part in a Country Magazine programme, engaging in a debate or giving a talk, with the exception of the one "anonymous blind man" who made a Christmas Wireless appeal. I do not ever recollect hearing a talk to blind gardeners or poultry farmers; I have never heard a blind versus a sighted team in Spelling Bee or Quiz. I could multiply these instances in almost every department of broadcasting.

Derek McCulloch has done splendid work on behalf of crippled children, and his warm hearted sympathy in a good cause must be a household word. Could not the Children's Hour bring blind children to the microphone to show what they can do?

I would suggest that the B.B.C., besides taking part in a national conference, should be urged to give regular programmes to bring home the facts that I have put out in earlier paragraphs to the listening public as part of this intensive campaign, and should be animated not by a negative policy but a positive one; should put their best brains in contact with those of the societies dealing with the care and welfare of the blind in its broadest sense, to see how much they can do, and in how many varied ways.

Esmond Knight has shown the way in drama. Why not a play with an entirely blind cast? A concert given by the blind is quite obviously possible. Talks could be given by a blind poultry farmer, a blind bee-keeper (if any such there be), a blind manipulative surgeon or masseur. Are

there no blind comedians for variety programmes? Cannot some well-known blind figure in public life be "In Town To-night?" These are only a few examples at random.

A month, even a week, of real intensive propaganda of this sort could interest, amuse and stir public opinion with results hitherto undreamed of, and productive of good not only to the blind but to the nation as a whole, by bringing the public into a closer touch with and consciousness of the blind in their midst and showing, as in no other way, the needs and the capabilities of the blind members of the community.

I offer the germ of this idea for what it is worth. It could, I am sure, be expanded, and once the snowball is started the avalanche would result. There is an immense amount of goodwill in the journalistic, radio and film world. It only needs awakening to practical achievement. Will someone give the lead and start the snowball rolling?

APPARATUS FOR THE BLIND

Competition for Home Teachers

A prize of £5. 5s. is offered by the National Institute for the Blind for the best essay submitted by a Home Teacher on the subject *Apparatus for the Blind: How far it meets present needs, and suggestions for (a) its improvement and (b) possible new apparatus.*

The following conditions should be observed: Essays should not exceed 2,000 words in length, and should be typewritten, on one side of the paper only. They should bear a nom de plume, and be accompanied by a sealed envelope containing the name and address of the competitor and marked on the outside with the nom de plume given on the essay.

Entries to reach the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1, not later than December 31st, 1945. Please write "Apparatus Competition" on the top left-hand corner of the outer envelope or wrapper.

The object of the competition is to bring to light any requirements of the blind for apparatus which are not being met satisfactorily or at all. The prize will be offered annually provided a sufficient number of satisfactory entries are received.

SOCIAL CENTRES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO BLIND COMMITTEES

*Summary of an Address by Miss A. S. Evans, at the Southern Regional Association Refresher Course
July, 1945.*

I HAVE been asked to open a discussion on Social Centres, with special reference to one run by a committee of blind people.

It had always seemed to me that something might be done to make a Club for the Blind even more pleasurable and of greater use. So many people who lose their sight in middle life find the lack of any need for their organising or social gifts exceedingly depressing. Handicrafts fill a big gap, but they do not help a person to feel of some importance to the community unless they are more than hobbies. A Club which would expect its members to take an active part in the running of things and to think and plan for its good would give an outlet for just those faculties of organisation which, by not being called upon, so easily fall into disuse. The feeling of dependence on others, hated in varying degrees by all blind folk, would be minimised by arranging for them to do any of the club duties that they can.

The Club should aim above all at a footing of equality between all the people present, whether blind or sighted. Programmes can be planned which will entertain all, without either stressing their handicap or overlooking it. The audience should be active, not passive, and the Club a place where each should be respected as a person whose sayings and doings are of interest to everybody. Too often at home the family get into the habit of belittling or ignoring the opinions of blind relatives; if they are listened to in their own right as members of their Club it helps not only them but their families.

I should like to tell you of an experiment we have been making along these lines for nearly two years at Tottenham. A hall at the Public Library is lent to us free once a month. A Committee was chosen representative of different aspects of blindness and of varying age and experience. All but one of its members can read and write Braille. It consisted of four men and four women. The women included a totally blind home worker of wide experience, a married woman with a little sight who formerly was in a workshop, another young married woman with some sight, and a younger woman whose family treated her as a child. The men consisted of a man of fifty, now regarded as unemployable, another trained for basket-work but obliged to give it up owing to ill-health and inclined to be melancholy, a young

piano tuner who felt he was out of everything because his friends were in the Forces and it was difficult to work up a connection in war-time, and a man of forty considered too old to train but fit and energetic.

Two of my friends agreed to be responsible for refreshments with the help of two of the blind members' wives and volunteer waitresses. Other friends have come in since, and all helpers are treated as members. In our letter of invitation, sent out to all who could come, we told them that meetings would be monthly, and it was up to themselves to make the experiment a success. The opening was a surprise to all, for in spite of the fact that it was November, with the possibility of air-raids, more than a hundred people were present. The new Committee was introduced, and then gave an entertainment, with the help of one or two other musical members. That was in 1943. Our numbers have fluctuated, but were never less than forty even during the rocket-bombing, and are now seventy-one, without guides.

The Committee has proved a most valuable activity, rather like a small and intimate club. Our first principle is to try to put the welfare of the Club first and our personal feelings second. The time of the first meeting was largely taken up with making each other's acquaintance, and even then it was noticeable that those who had always been blind had a different outlook from the others, and that they would be mutually helpful to one another in shaping the affairs of the Club.

There was a tendency at first to expect me to suggest and decide things, but I thought it would be better to try things out in the way they planned, and then decide afterwards if a better way might have been used. As they needed someone to give them confidence to initiate ideas, I agreed to preside over committees. We elected a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Minute Secretary, Treasurer, pianist, one to help collect and count the money and one to act as store-keeper. Each had a special duty, and had to be responsible for carrying it out.

The first Committee was asked to serve for six months and then to be re-elected by the members, or thrown out! With one or two unavoidable changes, the original Committee was elected to office for another year. The second election was last June, and with th:

approval of the whole Club it was decided that in future only four of the Committee should be eligible for re-election, so as to get four new members each year. Those who were stood off were sorry, but not disgruntled. Most of the new ones nominated were shy about standing, but the new Committee has proved just as keen as the old, once they have got together, and found what a friendly affair it is. When I think something is needed to help people to get to know each other better, I put the point to the Committee, and ask them how they think we can achieve it.

You may be interested in the range of our programmes. We have a general idea of what will be done for some months ahead, and at a later stage each meeting is planned in detail, an effort being made to carry out any idea that is put forward by members of the Club to the Committee. We have so many ideas put forward, and so much energy goes into the Club, that we could easily plan fortnightly meetings. The programmes for 1943, 1944 and 1945, will give an idea of the variety of subjects and the width of interests

1943.

- Nov. Opening Social.
- Dec. Concert by the Music Group and visit from Middlesex Association Secretary.

1944.

- Jan. Party for children of members, and concert.
- Feb. Handicrafts, dominoes and sing-song.
- March Talk by a County Councillor on the Council's work.
- April Concert by members.
- May Percussion band concert, games, and Sense Competitions arranged by Committee.
- June Garden party. Election. Knitting for Merchant Navy Comforts Service begun.

July Club closed on account of bombing.

Sept.

Oct. Reopening Social.

Nov. Recital and humorous reading.

Dec. Bring-and-buy Sale for Club funds. Visit from Middlesex Chairman and Secretary.

1945.

- Jan. Party for children of members.
- Feb. Group discussion on Homes for the Blind and Seeing.
- March "Go-as-you-please" afternoon (talking sing-song).
- April "Spring Magazine" (including spring poem, cookery notes, nature notes, musical competition, etc.)

May Competitions and spelling-bee.

June Election of Committee. Concert (including unaccompanied Elizabethan quartets and solo singing).

July Outing to Southend, and tea for those who could not be present at the outing. Visit and talk by home worker.

Everyone who comes to the Club says how much they enjoy it. There is no doubt that it has opened up the lives of its members, letting in the spirit of friendship and the sense of doing something in and for the community.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Organists' Successes.—Of the six successful candidates at the recent R.C.O. Examinations awarded the Fellowship Diploma, three are young blind musicians whose progress has been watched for some time with the keenest interest: John G. Busbridge, Gilbert Jones and Derrick F. White. That John Busbridge should have secured the "Limpus" Prize, won by the candidate obtaining the highest number of marks in organ playing, again demonstrates the musical capabilities of the blind executant. No less gratifying is the achievement of the blind candidates in the Associateship Examination, for out of 66 entrants, 12 only obtained the A.R.C.O. Diploma, and of these, three are blind: Robert Eves, Daniel A. McNulty, Mus. Bac., and Leslie F. Pye. Daniel McNulty, Organist of the Augustinian Church, Dublin, shared with a seeing candidate the "Sawyer" Prize. To all we extend our warmest congratulations.

Blind Gold Medallist.—John R. Kinghorn, a pupil of the Royal Blind School, Edinburgh, was gold medallist in a recent examination held by the Royal College of Music, London.

Bristol Blind Gardeners and Craftsmen.—Showpiece at the Bristol Guild of Blind Gardeners' fourth Horticultural Show, opened by the Lord Mayor of Bristol on 1st Sept., was a doll's house, complete with furnishings and fittings. It was entered for the Handicraft Section by a 70-year old blind worker. The cup for the best exhibit in the Gardening Section was won by Mr. C. E. Holley.

Blind Swimmer's Prowess.—Mr. P. Bennett, a blind man, gave a remarkable swimming demonstration at the Sheffield Dolphin's Swimming Gala on 1st Sept. He even gave rescue assistance to another swimmer.

EFFECTIVE PROPAGANDA

OUR contributor "Tritone" draws attention in this issue to the need not only for an intensive propaganda campaign on behalf of Blind Welfare but for a change in the form of its propaganda. He calls for propaganda which is "straightforward, truthful and entirely free from exaggeration in any direction," and bids us to cast behind us "the emotional aspect" which, in his opinion, "has been stressed too much."

All our readers are likely to agree with his views on this subject. Propaganda which is not truthful is definitely harmful; propaganda which is not straightforward is wasteful; propaganda which exaggerates is amateurish; propaganda which stresses the emotional aspect is exaggerative. But before brushing aside the emotional aspect, one or two points should be considered.

Broadly speaking, there are two forms of propaganda connected with Blind Welfare: the form whose main object is to arouse interest, and the form whose main object is to open purses. An example of the first is the contents of a paper such as *THE NEW BEACON*, especially the articles by blind contributors and the paragraphs devoted to the achievements of the blind; an example of the second is an eloquent speech by a practised speaker, such as the late Harry Preece, a blind man whose stirring rhetoric brought floods of tears to his audiences and floods of cheques to the cause for which he was pleading. Preece did not, of course, neglect cold facts, just as *THE NEW BEACON* does not neglect warm sentiments, but whereas *THE NEW BEACON* aims directly at the head, Preece aimed directly at the heart.

Now Preece was a cultured, progressive blind man who knew what he was about, and he knew better than most men that Blind Welfare would take a backward step if it were deprived of the fruits of public generosity. He also knew that the best way to secure a plentiful crop of fruit was to scatter the seed of fact in order to create interest and to water the seed plentifully with emotion in order to spur the interest into fervent, immediate action. We do not think human nature has changed since his time, and while Blind Welfare needs funds to carry out its objects we do not consider the emotional appeal can be entirely neglected in its propaganda. But fashions have changed since then—they are always changing—and the propagandist must ever be wary of touching the heart of the public in the spot which for the moment is unfashionable. Little Nell and little Paul Dombey definitely do not touch the right spot in the heart to-day as they did in the days of Dickens.

Yet bare, cold facts in Blind Welfare propaganda are not enough; in order to secure their object, which is to arouse the general public to active and zealous participation in Blind Welfare either by personal service or gift, they must be clothed with imagination and warmed by feeling. But the clothes and the heating apparatus must be up to date. "Sob stuff" is rags to-day and leaves one cold. What is always needed in propaganda of all kinds is mastery of the facts and mastery of their presentation—and the mastery in their presentation is just as important as encyclopædic knowledge of them. Those who seek to arouse and sustain interest in Blind Welfare must not be simply scientific; they must also be artistic. All art is a process of selection, and he who is able to select from the mass of facts relative to blindness and the blind those which will go right home to the public, in such a way that they touch both head and heart into urgent precipitancy, is your only true propagandist.

There are many ways of presenting Blind Welfare to the public in a spirit which will not offend the blind who rightly declaim against "This Pity" and yet will inculcate heartfelt sympathy in the seeing. For instance, what could be stronger in appeal to the readers of a musical paper than the life story of a blind musician, told in *Who's Who* fashion, from learning to tune a piano to Mus.Bac.—with just one line added of direct appeal? Or to the readers of a religious paper than the story of a blind clergyman, from school to rectory? Or to the readers of a technical paper than the story of a blind factory worker, from "unemployable" idleness to skilled engineering? Would not the mere line of a graph of a blind man's output in a factory, from the 20, 30, 40 per cent. of the faltering yet persevering beginner, to the triumphant 100, 120 and 130 per cent. of the "pride of the works," be a tremendous appeal if backed with wording of just the right balance? Who can estimate the force

of the emotional appeal of an actual anecdote of some child at the Sunshine Homes to the mother turning over the pages of a Home Journal? If support is sought for Home Teaching Services, what better than the diary of but one day's work of a peregrinating Home Teacher? What could be more effective in "selling" Physiotherapy by the Blind than a blind practitioner's letter of thanks to his School for his training followed by several of his patients' letters of thanks to him for his service? Contrast the books a sighted reader and a blind reader can buy for a pound, and the number of words each can read for a penny; list side by side the simple things a blind person can or cannot do by himself; illustrate by a column of figures and dates how a blind child, a blind adult, the aged blind can master Braille or Moon—if such items as these are included in your propaganda, you will bring the seeing person right into the heart of the blind community and make him familiar with its affairs in the light of its own psychology. But do not let the brilliance of the actual and possible achievements dazzle the reader to disregard of the actual and possible failures. Contrast is the thing. A picture all light will arouse admiration; a picture all shadow will arouse pity; but the practical, perfervid sympathy which the propagandist seeks, will only be aroused by a picture in which the light and shade are skilfully blended in a chiaroscuro that, in itself, constitutes the real appeal.

THE EDITOR

ENCOUNTERS

By MARY G. THOMAS.

BLIND men and women of outstanding ability have generally in the course of their lives come into contact with some of the leading personages of their day. For a short time the stage on which great national figures play their parts has also been the background of their blind contemporaries. Some have received marks of royal favour, others have met statesmen, musicians, writers. A few of these have been collected for this article.

Shortly before the end of European hostilities, Mr. Churchill ended one of his reviews of the war situation with Burns' well-known words:—

"To make a happy fireside clime
For weans and wife—
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life."

How many of his hearers, even in Scotland, knew that the words were first of all addressed to a blind man? They are part of a poem written in the memorable year 1789 to Dr. Thomas Blacklock, a blind Scottish divine, and himself something of a poet, though no rival to his great fellow-countryman. William Levy, author of the rather racy "Blindness and the Blind," seems to have found the friendship of Blacklock, "the learned, the philosophical, the religious and the scrupulously moral" for Burns "the untutored, the rambling, the careless liver and the thriftless," rather startling, but he charitably concludes that the "vigorous and far-seeing effusions of Burns," with their hatred of hypocrisy, must have made a deep impression on the feeling heart of Blacklock.

Blacklock's vivid descriptions of natural beauty in his verses aroused the interest of

Dr. Johnson, but that writer was far too full of common-sense to regard the blind man's ability as having anything occult about it. He pours scorn on a critic who (to quote Boswell's record of the doctor's judgment) "laboured to explain philosophically how Blacklock may have done, by means of his own faculties, what it is impossible he should do." "We may," continues Dr. Johnson, "be absolutely sure that such passages are combinations of what he had remembered of other writers who could see." Dr. Blacklock and his wife were fond of entertaining their friends, and the cultured and witty of Edinburgh society were often to be found at their house. "There were heard the chatter of Mrs. Cockburn, the lively tongue of the Duchess of Gordon, with the voices of Adam Ferguson, Lord Monboddo and Dr. Robertson." There too, no doubt, David Hume, the philosopher, was sometimes a guest, for he and Blacklock were good friends, and through his influence the blind writer's work was brought to the notice of Joseph Spence, Professor of Poetry at Oxford. One hopes that all the guests at the tea parties were not so thirsty as Dr. Johnson, who once startled Mrs. Blacklock by drinking nineteen cups of tea. Walter Scott was probably still too young to be invited to these *salons*, but the blind minister welcomed him to his home. "The kind old man," writes Scott, "opened to me the stores of his library, and through his recommendation I became intimate with Ossian and Spenser."

Readers of Charles Dickens' "American Notes" will remember his vivid account of a visit to Perkins Institution, just over a century ago, and his lively interest in Laura Bridgman,

the deaf-blind girl who was educated there. He wrote: "Her face was radiant with intelligence and pleasure. Her hair, braided with her own hands, was bound about a head whose intellectual capacity and development were beautifully expressed in its graceful outline, and its broad open brow. Her dress, arranged by herself, was a pattern of neatness and simplicity; the work she had knitted lay beside her; her writing book was on the desk."

As daughter of the Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, and later Bishop of Chichester, it is not surprising that Elizabeth Gilbert, the blind founder of the Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind (better known to some as the Tottenham Court Road Blind Workshops) should have come across many of the notable men and women of her time.

An attractive story is told of her encounter, at the age of ten, with the writer of "We Are Seven," to whose sensitive gentle spirit a blind child must have made an irresistible appeal. Oxford was conferring an honorary degree on Wordsworth, and he was staying with Bessie's father for the event. He entered a room to find the little girl alone. "Madam," said the poet, "I hope I do not disturb you." And of course ten-year-old Bessie was delighted.

When the Gilberts moved to Chichester, Henry Manning, later to become the famous Cardinal, was Archdeacon. In 1851 he announced his decision to join the Church of Rome, and a day or two previous he visited the Bishop for the last time as an Anglican clergyman. As he waited in the hall, Bessie came in from a walk, and hesitated for a moment, not quite sure how close she was to the door. He stepped forward, and taking her hand, said: "I believe you cannot find the way." Bessie, relating the incident later, said, "Only said, 'Thank you,' but I thought—is it *I* that cannot find my way?" For her friend's decision had made a deep impression on a sympathetic and deeply religious girl, just grown-up.

Where royalties are concerned, all the honours must go to the Austrian musician Theresa von Paradis. She was blind from early childhood, and early learned to sing and to play the piano. When she was about twelve, she took part in an oratorio, and so delighted the Empress Maria Theresa that she immediately settled a pension for life upon her! William Levy rather dryly hints that perhaps the fact that Theresa's father was a man of importance in the State had something to do with the Empress's rather startling generosity to a child prodigy. In later years Theresa visited England, bearing

with her a letter of introduction to Queen Charlotte, and while here she played at Windsor before George III and his Queen, and at Carlton House before the Prince of Wales. Royalty alone, however, was not the full sum of Theresa von Paradis's encounters. For some time she was a patient of the Austrian doctor, Friedrich Mesmer, from whose name the word "mesmerism" is coined. She hoped under his treatment to regain her sight, but his behaviour in her case rather bears out the common view that Mesmer was a charlatan and fraud, for he refused to allow her friends to visit her while she was a patient in his house, and they finally had to appeal to the city magistrates to secure her forcible removal.

We do not know the date of Theresa's visit to England, but the marked Royal sympathy shown to her may have been influenced by the failing sight of George III himself. Both he and one of his children became blind—a fact that was recalled in the 1840's, when his daughter, the Duchess of Gloucester, visited Dr. Moon's publishing house in Brighton, and contributed to the money he was raising for his work. She spoke "with many tears" of the blindness of her father and sister, saying how much she wished that they had been able to use Dr. Moon's type.

James Gale, one of the blind men who, with Dr. Armitage, made up the first committee of the British and Foreign Blind Association, also had his encounters with royalty; the Prince and Princess of Wales, who had watched some of his rather alarming scientific experiments, told Queen Victoria about him, and she received him at Windsor, and, with Prince Leopold and eight-year-old Princess Beatrice watched while he placed a large bag of gunpowder, together with the protective mixture he had invented for making it non-explosive, on her sitting-room fire.

John Metcalf, blind "Jack of Knaresborough," famous maker of roads, swaggering recruiting sergeant in the glories of blue and gold lace, and with a streak of the adventurer in his make-up, probably came across many notables in his rather colourful career, though we have no record of them. He links up, however, in one interesting way with our present royal family, for under the direction of the then Lord Harewood, he made the road that linked Harrogate and Harewood Bridge, after obtaining the contract in open competition. Later, he again obtained a contract from a committee on which Lord Harewood was one of the leading members, so he evidently carried out his work satisfactorily.

RUBBER TYRE RECLAIMING: An American Venture

WE have received from Mr. Peter Salmon (Director of the Industrial Home for the Blind, Brooklyn, N.Y.) an interesting note on the work done there in the business of rubber tyre reclaiming and the making of rubber mats.

Before the war they had manufactured mats from discarded motor-car tyres, purchasing what is known as "the carcass," i.e., what remains after the rubber has been "skived off." During the earlier part of the war the department was obliged to close down, but in 1944, permission was given by the War Production Board for the work to open up again for the provision of mats for the Army, Navy and Maritime Commission. The following extract from Mr. Salmon's letter describes the process in his own words:—

"Our idea was to do experimental work so that we would be in a better position when the war is over to compete. For this purpose we have purchased machinery that permits us to do the skiving of the rubber. This is where the reclaiming end of the business comes in. On an old tyre there are very often three grades of rubber—one composed altogether of rubber, a second which is mostly rubber but has some fabric, and a third which has a great deal of fabric. There is a separate price set for each grade, as might be expected, according to their value. This rubber is useful in the manufacture

of new rubber and is processed for this purpose through what are known as reclamation plants.

"Before the rubber is skived off, we take out the two metal beads which are in each tyre. These have to be thrown away and are a considerable waste. The tyre is then cut and it is at this point that we do the skiving. After this, we cut the tyre up into strips which are later punched and rounded and then woven into mats.

"We make two types of mats—one with these long strips just referred to, and another with links about 2½" long. The link mat has some advantage in that it can be rolled up and put away. This is not so essential, however, until you get into larger sizes. We also made a link mat out of new rubber links. This has been developed by National Industries for the Blind. Through National Industries we are in the process of setting up about five or six shops to manufacture the link mats and then these shops would, in turn, be the ones who would skive the rubber and furnish the links to other shops in their territory.

"We bought the patent on the type of mat made with the long strips and expect to work out an arrangement with the other shops whereby they can manufacture these mats. We expect, if our plans materialise, to employ about 50 to 75 blind persons in the mat department."

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Education of the Blind.

SIR,—From some of the letters published in THE NEW BEACON recently, the education of the blind seems to becoming a controversial subject. "Not whose right, but what's right?" is the maxim that should apply to the educating of the blind. We all realise that the home should be the sound base in which children are nurtured. But is this so to-day? Do all the homes of Britain, whether seeing or blind, build constructively into their children?

The point of issue is, where is the blind child going to receive the greatest beneficial training to fit him to live as a normal citizen in society when he reaches adult life? Can his own home be the training ground for such a task?

However good are the intentions of parents,

some literally smother their children with unwanted sympathy in their attempt to make some amends to the child for its having been born with defective vision. Then, what understanding there is has to come from the schools where these children find themselves.

Family life in its broadest sense can spring up anywhere. It is not only in one's home that one's family is. Family life can flourish in an institution, if everyone is willing to give to the whole, so that the children there are able to develop to the fullest.

Of course, the old sentimental idea of a home with a big fire in the hearth may have to give place to a fire in the heart—then a home can be built anywhere with any people under any kind of conditions.

Educationists to day, who find themselves in

institutions for the blind, have the interests of the handicapped child at heart. What is needed is co-operation between the institution and their own home in giving to the children the sound character and sense of values which will be their greatest asset in the years to come.

Yours, etc..

R. ROSINA THOMAS.

To the Editor.

Don'ts for the Sighted.

SIR,—The comments of some recent writers in your paper on the stupid tactlessness of so many sighted people has induced me to submit to you an idea that has been in my mind for some time. Would it not be worth while for the National Institute for the Blind to print cards of "Don'ts" and supply them to institutes for the blind to be handed to visitors before they begin their tours of inspection? Something like this:—

"Great pain is often unintentionally given to blind people by things said in their hearing by sighted people. We are sure you would not wish to hurt anyone's feelings, and we shall therefore esteem it a favour if you will read and comply with the following:—

DON'T regard the blind as a sub-human species, apart from the rest of mankind. They are just ordinary people with very bad sight, as Sir Arthur Pearson said.

DON'T discuss the people here before their faces, as if they were animals in a zoo. How would you like it?

DON'T talk about their "affliction," or give any indication of your pity for them; they hate being pitied. If you feel that your pity must find expression—well, it takes money to carry on such institutions as this:—"Friend," said the Quaker, "I am sorry five pounds; how much art thou sorry?"

DON'T say "Isn't it wonderful!" It isn't. You could do anything that they can do, if it had been worth your while to devote the necessary time and trouble to learning to do it.

DON'T talk about compensations. This word to the blind is like a red rag to a bull.

In short:—

DON'T talk about blindness at all; it is not a popular subject here. The people here know that they are blind. Why rub it into them?"

A companion card might perhaps be drawn up for the relatives or friends of blind people not in institutions, containing much of the same matter as above, and cautions against pushing them about, and doing things for them that they could do for themselves.

Yours, etc.,

M.A.

BLIND OUTLOOK

Extracts from letters written to the Braille journal "Progress"

News from France

"...Up to the fall of France, I had a delightful correspondence in English Braille, with a lady in Marseilles, Mme. D. I wrote to her on July 10th; it was at a venture, for she is elderly and I did not know whether she was still alive. I have now received a letter from her. It was a bit flattened in the post, and contained some French contractions, and some of her usual unorthodox ones. It tells the sad tale of shortages, and of a lot of public opinion undermined by Vichy, and the German press and radio, but it tells also of a lady who retained her loyalty—for instance, she listened to the B.B.C. until she had to leave Marseilles, at risk of the death penalty... She quotes an epitaph on Pétain: 'Born at Verdun, died at Vichy.'"
—A.H. (BRIGHTON).

Blind People as Lecturers

"...It is disappointing to learn from an answer to an enquirer in your Question Box that there is no special agency for helping blind people to find work as lecturers... Can the N.I.B. or the National Association of Blind Workers do nothing?... It is indeed hard for blind people to gain a footing in the business or professional world, as I know from my own experience. We should not rest until every blind person is enabled to serve the community, each according to his special ability. Then we shall be well on the way to solving some of our most outstanding problems."—O.R. (BIRMINGHAM).

A Poultry-keeping Venture

"...I have decided to turn my back garden into a poultry run. This measures 38 feet square, and contains apple, pear, and plum trees (seven in all), which will afford shelter for the birds from weather conditions. The ground has been sown down to grass. I shall divide into two compartments, the first for the nesting boxes and scratching space during the bad weather, the other compartment will be the roosting part. I propose to start with four Rhode Island Reds, because these birds do not fly above three feet... My occupation in my sighted days was horticultural provider in my father's businesses... I am stone blind, but am hoping my new venture will be successful."—H.S. (ILKLEY).

THE LANTERN

By ALBERT HODGSON

BEFORE the fall of France I had a delightful Braille correspondent in Marseilles. The correspondence was conducted in English, though I tried a little French on the lady now and then. I hope it may be renewed, but as she was then elderly and may have suffered by the war, I doubt it. I began one letter to her: "Les aveugles de Brighton sont a la lanterne!" I hastened to assure her that this did not mean that Brighton had staged a new sort of revolution, with the local Dims understudying the part of Old Foulon, who, as readers of Dickens and Carlyle will remember, was strung up to a street lamp by the Paris mob because he had told the French people to eat grass. It merely meant that the Brighton Society for the Welfare of the Blind had moved into their new Headquarters, The Lantern.

Even before this delightful place existed, a lantern had been the badge of the society, with the motto, "The Lamp that Guides Brighton's Blind." But in earlier days it only had offices wedged in among other offices in some large block of building—latterly the Royal York buildings, which had been the hotel of the same name on the Old Steyne.

But a month or two before Hitler's patience got exhausted—or ours with him, for that matter—we got a place all our own, which was promptly named The Lantern. It is in the northern or Preston Park district of the town, having been one of the "desirable villa residences" that face the park. It still, of course, embodies the administrative offices, but it has also pleasant club-rooms where we can read, talk, write, or listen to the radio. One of them, formerly I suppose the conservatory, makes a delightful sun-room. Incidentally, about two years ago Jerry—apparently forgetting that he lived in a glass house—threw stones at it, or, to be more precise, a chunk of his ugly scrap iron, but this damage was long ago made good.

Into this lovely place we can come and go at will, but there are many organised events. Thus, on Monday and Wednesday afternoons we meet for games, mostly cards and dominoes. On Wednesday mornings there is a handicraft or "Pastime-Hobby class." I am a member of this and used to do basket work till our supply of cane ran out. After that they put me on knitting, which I do not manage nearly so well. In fact, I used to say that I would have liked to knit Hitler on the Madame Defarge

principle, but I dared not tackle the job lest it should come out Mr. Churchill.

The lady who usually has charge of me I call Penelope, though the name does not strictly fit, since the original Penelope unwove her own web, not somebody else's. Miss Gray, our principal home teacher and visitor—at least, she may be so called, as being of longest standing—says my middle name is Boob. But my table-mate—he deserves an article to himself and may one day get it—says she is mistaken, it is my first one. Another of the staff, Miss Bevan, I call "The Skiddereen Eagle," because on one occasion at class she kept as vigilant an eye on me as that Irish newspaper boasted it did on Lord Palmerston. This class is not held in the main building, but in a separate hall once the stable or garage of the house. It bears the name of the late Miss Monroe Ritchie, for many years our welfare secretary.

I must mention another lady, Mrs. Harker. She is not actually on the staff, but she comes on Tuesday afternoons to read aloud—mainly, of course, to those who do not read embossed type, but some of us who do also enjoy her readings. Finally, a general tribute to the whole bevy of lovely ladies who are the light of The Lantern. I cannot, of course, vouch for their looks, but I believe these are good, and that they are graceful of form we know from our experience of them as partners at our many jolly dances—we recently held a "Victory" one.

I think, too, that their calmness and courage ought to be mentioned. The bomb-fragment that smashed the sun-room one mid-morning was the only "direct hit." I was not there at the time, but later in the day found them carrying on cheerfully as usual. I have been at the Lantern when bombs or machine-gun fire, though not dangerously close, were near enough to raise an alarming racket and make one wonder where the next one would land. In all cases they were quite unperturbed outwardly, whatever their quite natural inward feelings may have been, and were concerned only to see that any of us who were on the premises got safely to shelter in the basement.

They are efficient at all branches of their work, from office routine to teaching Braille and handicrafts and organising what I like to call Binges. Last but not least, they are most charmingly cheeky. I can vouch for this as

in my case they have a strong basis for badinage apart from the above mentioned "Boobery"—the fact that, if I am not as green as our South Downs, my contour matches their large and generous curves.

This charming cheek is a point worth considering. It is the outward and visible sign that they regard us as friends and not merely as mere "card-index fodder." One service they render to me is not only apart from their routine work, but may even be regarded as interruption of it. Being one of the few living people who really enjoy letter-writing I have a large correspondence. By no means all of it is in Braille. Some of it is in very difficult handwriting at considerable length and containing many of the historical and literary allusions in which I delight. In short, it is more than my excellent landlady has the time, the eyesight or the spectacles to tackle. But if I go to The Lantern I can usually hold up a lovely lady and clamp her down to ten minutes or so of optical all-in wrestling.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Mrs. Winifred Holt Mather, of Williamstown, Mass., U.S.A., founder and Hon. Secretary of The Lighthouse, New York Association for the Blind.

Mrs. Mather was the daughter of a well-known New York publisher. Her sympathy in the blind was first aroused about forty years ago, when she saw two blind Italian boys as eager members of a concert audience in Florence. On her return to the States, she organised a Committee for providing the blind with free tickets for concerts and recitals, and from this initial effort went on to many other activities in their interests, including the founding of the Lighthouse for the Blind in New York, with which her name is specially associated. The Annual Report of this Association is a story of far-reaching activities—including a nursery school, training, employment and social recreations of all kinds. During the war of 1914-18, Mrs Mather visited France as the guest of the French Government to advise on the care of the war-blinded soldiers.

Her marriage in 1922, to Mr. Rufus Graves Mather meant that in future her work was to be carried on with the able co-operation of her husband, whose interest in the welfare of the blind was as warmly enthusiastic as her own. Together they travelled all over the world, and founded "Lighthouses" in many countries in Europe, the East and Latin-America.

She was known to English readers as the writer of a life of Henry Fawcett, the blind Postmaster General, and contributed much on blind welfare to American journals.

Mrs. Mary Hannah Hewitt, wife of Coun. W. Hewitt, Rotherham, aged 65 years. For ten years she was on the local Blind Welfare Committee.

William Williams, of Bangor, for the past seven years Chairman of the North Wales Society for the Blind, and previously Hon. Treasurer of the Society and later its Vice-Chairman. Mr. Williams had been connected with the work for nearly forty years, and had always taken a warm interest in the welfare of the blind.

Fr. Bruno Walkley, P.O., Prior of Woodchester and founder of the Guild of St. Cecilia for the Catholic blind.

The Hon. Rosamund Devereux, daughter of the 16th Viscount Hereford, who gave much time to the transcription of Braille books.

Miss Ivy Watkins, of Greenholme Bungalow, Sandy Lane, Parkmill, Swansea, in tragic circumstances, aged 35. Miss Watkins, who was totally deaf and blind and who also suffered from spinal trouble, rendering her at times a complete invalid, was educated at the Swansea and South Wales Institution for the Blind. Since leaving school her time was almost exclusively devoted to the welfare of deaf-blind persons. In this connection she made many friends, who will remember with the deepest appreciation her good work on their behalf. So great was the number of her correspondents that she eventually inaugurated a Floral Club, in connection with which two bi-monthly Braille magazines were circulated to deaf-blind friends. She also made many efforts to raise money on behalf of the Deaf-Blind Helpers' League, and it was her great desire that a permanent home for the deaf-blind should be established in South Wales.

Two years or so ago, Miss Watkins won a prize for the writing of a short story in the International Competition run by the Jewish Institute of America, and all those who have been privileged to correspond with her, or to read any of her many stories, will acknowledge, without hesitation, her brilliance as a writer.

Her courage and fortitude under gravest handicaps and most serious difficulties will always be remembered and will doubtless prove a great inspiration to those friends of the deaf-blind people whose privilege it will be to continue her work.

PERSONALIA

MISS D. R. SPOONER, Organising Secretary of the East Suffolk County Association for the Blind, was the recipient of two presentations made to her by the Committee and Officers of the Association and also from all blind persons in East Suffolk, the former presentation consisting of a cheque and the latter of a pearl necklacé. They were made in recognition of the splendid record of service maintained by Miss Spooner for the past twenty-one years.

* * *

MRS. HILL, Derby's oldest resident, who is blind, recently celebrated her 102nd birthday.

* * *

A blind pastor, the Rev. WILLIAM HAYDN MORGAN, of South Creak, Norfolk, has accepted the pastorate of the John Robinson Memorial Church, Gainsborough, in succession to the Rev. G. Cooper.

* * *

Last month, Mr. TUDOR EVANS, Chief Administrative Officer to the Merthyr Corporation, retired after completing 47 years in the service of the Local Authority. For many years he has taken particular interest in Blind Welfare, and since the passing of the Blind Persons Act in 1920 has been responsible for the preparation of the various schemes dealing with the welfare of the Borough's blind people.

* * *

As Miss IDA MANN can no longer attend at the National Institute's Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring-on-Thames, Squadron-Leader MACLATCHLY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.O.M.S., The Eye Hospital, Oxford, will be acting as Ophthalmic Surgeon for the time being.

* * *

At the meeting of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind held on 24th July, Mr. H. J. WAGG, O.B.E., who has been Vice-Chairman of the Council for several years, was appointed Acting Chairman, and Mr. GODFREY ROBINSON, M.C., Vice-Chairman. Mr. Robinson served in the Royal Artillery in the last war, when he was blinded. He was trained at St. Dunstan's and joined the N.I.B.'s Council in 1933. He is Joint Managing Director of Thomas Robinson, Sons & Co., Ltd., Provision Importers and Merchants, with a head office at Hull and branch offices all over the Country. He is also a representative member of National Committees concerned with the Provision Trades now working with the Ministry of Food. He was Sheriff of Hull for the year 1941-2.

New members appointed to fill vacancies on the Council were as follows:—

Group A: Coun. The Rev. R. V. BAINTON and Mr. M. TOMLINSON (both representing the Northern Counties Association for the Blind), in place of Alderman James Patrick and Alderman Hedley Mason (resigned).

Group E: Capt. BRUCE OTTLEY, Mr. B. ST. G. BOWER, Mr. JOHN JARVIS, and Mr. L. MIDDLETON, in place of Capt. Sir Beachcroft Towse, Mr. G. Holme, and Mr. A. S. Cross (resigned), and the late Godfrey H. Hamilton.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home

National Association of Workshops.—The Annual Report includes some interesting statistics, showing what a large part has been played by the workshops for the blind in the war effort. Since the beginning of the war, over 41,000 airborne panniers have been supplied through the Association, and the grand total value of contracts carried out for Government Departments amounted to £314,652, while the expenses incurred were only about £300, which the Report justifiably claims is "very modest" in view of the volume of clerical work entailed.

Contracts undertaken by the Association during the year for baskets, brushes, brooms, hospital stockings, etc., comprised over 39,600 articles; they were allocated to 37 constituent members of the Association. The Report records with satisfaction a National List giving the wages payable for basket making, which has been in operation since February of the present year. Thanks are given to the Ministry of Supply and Board of Trade for the help and sympathy shown throughout the war, which has done so much to ease the problem of blind employment, and has given the blind man and woman that opportunity to share in the country's war effort which they so much appreciate.

Blind Welfare Association (Northern Ireland).—The Association's sixth Annual Report shows evidence of many-sided activity and expansion which, in view of wartime difficulties, is remarkable. Since the beginning of the financial year 1944-45 the Association has been a registered Company, able in its own right to hold

property and investments. Three new local Committees have been formed at Portadown, Keady and Randalstown, and the Committee at Ballymena, disbanded at the outset of war, has been revived. In order to promote uniformity in the regions, a Conference of local Committees was held in Belfast. There are now 12 home teachers employed by the Association, and their work in rural districts, often outside the range of country bus or train, has been helped by auto-cycles, provided through the generosity of a private donor and the National Institute for the Blind.

Empire.

National Council for the Blind of Ireland.—The 14th Annual Report for 1944-45 does not record any outstanding event, but is evidence of the way in which the National Council, quietly but steadily, is making its way as a social organisation that counts in the life of Eire. A deputation urging reform on the lines of our own Blind Voters Act was received by representatives of the Government; the Minister of Education has consented to receive a delegation on the education of blind children, the Minister of the Department of Industry and Commerce has revised the Food Voucher scheme to include a section of the blind previously ineligible—all these show that the welfare of the blind has become a matter of increased concern to those in authority; and the National Council has certainly played no small part in bringing this about. Reports from the six county branches show that in country areas, as in Dublin, much good work goes on. The newly-formed branch in Galway, now over a year old, has over 350 cases on its register and a home teacher recognised by the County Council.

Foreign.

Association for the Blind in Berne.—For five years news of work for the blind in several countries of Europe has naturally been very scanty, and the arrival of annual reports from this Association, covering all the war years, is therefore of special interest. The attractive photographs that illustrate them help to tell the story of the work to those who find the German text baffling. With the Reports they give also excellent specimens of Appeal literature—these in French and again delightfully illustrated. The Association has a School, Training Centre and Workshop at Spiez, a Workshop at Berne, a Home for the Blind in the same town and a Home Workers' scheme. A few years ago spinning was introduced as a new occupation for the blind women in the Association's care, and

has proved a useful craft. The Swiss blind are also beginning to take their place in sighted industries, and one photograph shows a woman worker engaged in light packing. A picture of a small girl gymnast with apparently nothing to learn from the "daring young man" of flying trapeze fame, and one of a newspaper kiosk, with its blind vendor, show that the Association is one which keeps up to date.

A PROGRESSIVE LOCAL AUTHORITY

THE Coventry city archivist, in a recent article in the "Coventry Evening Telegraph," has probably recorded the first local authority to assist in the higher education of the blind, more than 300 years before the Blind Persons Act.

In 1612, Prince Henry, son of James I, visited the town, and had his attention called to James Illedge, a blind pupil of the Coventry Free School, who had shown himself so promising that it was thought that he might benefit by University education.

The Master of Exeter College, Oxford (later Bishop of Worcester) accepted him, and the Corporation of Coventry gave grants from time to time, even continuing them after he had taken his degree, for, as their minutes record, he had shown such "a towardly disposicion to proceed in learning" that further help was justified.

The Corporation even went further. For when Illedge returned home from Oxford, he was paid £15 a year by the Corporation for eleven years in return for giving a weekly lecture in Holy Trinity Church. What happened afterwards, we do not know.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND,
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

BRAILLE MUSIC

The prices given are net.

Dances :

- | | | |
|-------|--|-----|
| 19299 | Grey, H. Chewing a piece of straw, <i>Song</i>
<i>Fox-trot</i> | 6d. |
| 19301 | Kapp, D. Just a pray'r away, <i>Song</i>
<i>Fox-trot</i> | 6d. |
| 19300 | Quinn, P. The boy in the bell-bottom
trousers, <i>Song Fox-trot</i> | 6d. |
| 19302 | Raksin, D. Laura, <i>Song Fox-trot</i> | 6d. |

MOON BOOKS.

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---------|
| 4708-4715 | The Gobi Desert, by M. Cable
and F. French. (Limited edition.) | 8 vols. |
| 4752-4753 | A Lost Lady, by Willa Cather.
(Limited edition.) | 2 vols. |

BRAILLE BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and blind individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covers.

Fiction:

The Virginians. A tale of the last century, by W. Makepeace Thackeray. 11 vols. 18715-25. 7s. 9d. per vol. F827.

A sequel to "Esmond," in which Beatrix reappears as an elderly woman, "jaded, battered, worldly, not altogether unkindly." The novel is marked by wit and wisdom.

Political:

How Parliament Works, by A. W. H. James. Pamphlet 19330. 3s. 6d. E35.

Wing-Commander James, Parliamentary Private Secretary to the President of the Board of Education in the late Government, gives a clear and simple statement of parliamentary procedure, and answers

such questions as "What does an M.P. do?" "How is an Act of Parliament made?"

Pandas.

No. 88. The Road to Serfdom, by F. A. Hayek. 4 vols. 2s. net the set.

A leading economist sketches a programme of a future order of society, based on his belief that a policy of freedom for the individual is the secret of the only true progress.

No. 89. Alone we Embark, by Maura Laverty. 3 vols. 1s. 6d. net the set.

A tale of an Irish village, before and during "the troubles." Mary Sheehy, heroine of the story, is drawn with sympathy and understanding.

No. 90. The Story of Dr. Wassell, by James Hilton. 2 vols. 1s. net the set.

One of the most exciting, true stories of the war, depicting in Dr. Wassell a man whose courage and resourcefulness was no less than his kindness of heart.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

Applications are invited for the post of **Secretary**. Write stating experience in blind welfare work and salary required. The Secretary, Royal Institution for the Blind, 50, Granby Street, Leicester.

The **Coventry Society for the Blind** invite applications for the post of a **female Home Teacher and Visitor**—sighted and certificated. Salary according to experience. Applications, with testimonials, and stating age and experience, to be addressed to Mrs. R. E. Staner, 7, St. Patrick's Road, Coventry.

Home Teacher, female, sighted, certificated, required for Nottingham City area; commencing salary £180 (exclusive of war bonus), rising by £10 per annum to £210 per annum. Applications, stating age and experience, should be addressed to the undersigned.

A. C. V. THOMAS,
Superintendent and Secretary.

Royal Midland Institution for the Blind,
Chaucer Street,
Nottingham.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Applications are invited for the post of Home Teacher (sighted) to work under the direction of the Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind. Salary, if certificated, from £180 to £250 a year, according to experience, plus cost of living allowance, at present at the rate of £26 a year. Applicants must be able to drive a car.

The person selected for appointment will be required to produce a satisfactory medical certificate.

Applications, stating age, experience and qualifications, with copies of three recent testimonials, to be sent to the County Secretary, H.A.C.B., 81, North Walls, Winchester, by October 13th, 1945.

F. V. BARBER,
Clerk of the County Council.

The Castle, Winchester.
August 29th, 1945.

Lessons given in Dietetics by correspondence. For particulars apply to Robert Malton, 18, Claremont Road, Folkestone.

Experienced, certificated **Home Teacher** seeks re-engagement. E.M., c/o Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

HOME TEACHERS' EXAMINATION, 1946. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

WANTED IMMEDIATELY. Lady Companion to a retired journalist and her father, both blind. The post, residential, entails preparation of simple meals, reading of correspondence, newspapers and books, and accompanying to and from Methodist Church. Domestic staff kept. Salary 30s. per week plus accommodation. The post is an ideal one and well recommended. Apply Organising Secretary, Warwickshire Association for the Blind, 14, Northgate Street, Warwick.

BASKET MAKING.

Competent man with sound knowledge of the trade required for position of Foreman. Present weekly wage £5 10s. od., plus 23s. cost-of-living bonus.

Apply by letter, stating age and enclosing copies of testimonials to the Manager, Workshops for the Adult Blind, Whickham View, Benwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

BRUSH MAKING.

Capable man with experience and sound knowledge of the trade required for position of Foreman. Present weekly wage, £5 10s. od., plus 23s. od. cost-of-living bonus.

Apply by letter, stating age and experience and enclosing copies of testimonials to the Manager, Workshops for the Adult Blind, Whickham View, Benwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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THE REWARDS OF SERVICE

By A HOME VISITOR.

SOCIAL service as a career satisfies the urge to serve others rather than that of personal reward, and readers will probably agree that the work of the Home Visitor comes within this category.

Compared with the financial and kindred rewards of the commercial world, for instance, district work appears to offer an unsatisfactory life, yet after ten years in slum work the writer would say that the rewards are there, and that there is a rich source of personal happiness to be gained from odd tributes of gratitude which compensates for the material disadvantages.

Actually to see the beneficial results of good social service in our many small family circles is sufficient reward by itself. In addition, the personal thanks of some grateful recipients fall mainly to us.

However, gratitude needs an outlet, and the various forms it takes provide a few problems worth consideration.

It is really difficult to convince some people that in straightening out a few of their troubles we are merely functioning as a channel through which the public services spend rates money. To such simple folk this fact counts far less than the personality of the visitor, who, if of the normally kindly type, may be subject to embarrassing tributes.

Before proceeding in this sugary strain it is well to emphasise that their opposite numbers—the disgruntled, and those who constantly revive the point about rates money—are numerous enough to dispel any fairy godmother or “Lady with the lamp” illusions which might assail us after a touching interlude.

The purpose of this article, however, is to consider the tributes of the grateful, and the comfort they bring, no matter how embarrassing the gift, or how firmly and persistently we may refuse it. Like the rest of humankind we like to know that our efforts are appreciated, for we often spend many unofficial thoughts and efforts on our individual before he becomes a case-paper on the committee agenda.

Gifts vary. Authority reigns supreme in some cases. Summary treatment is needed for the unpleasant person who seeks to bribe for future favours. There is also the genuine thankoffering

October 15th, 1945

of money for chocolates, etc., out of a first grant, which needs no consideration before refusal. Acceptance of any gift of value demands prior consultation with Authority, and this wise rule is adhered to by all who are worthy of their calling.

From the serious problems of givers and receivers we come to the small problems of an infinite variety of valueless oddments, ranging from a pair of knitted bed-socks to a kitten—a stream of gifts which would merely irritate our higher officials were they called upon to pass judgment, and which we know are sincere marks of appreciation by good, simple people.

To accept, or to offend? Here are a few examples.

A housewife is removing hot cakes from the oven. The tempting smell snares the visiting novice into stating this fact, and she is at once presented with some of the cakes wrapped in newspaper. The writer once put one such parcel in her bag, forgot them, and ended the day with every case-paper nicely greased.

A new case has his grant through. The second visit is the signal for mother to bid the eldest child to "bring in the chocolates." An ornate box tied with red ribbon is presented by a blushing "Lizzie," while all the other children look on with glistening eyes. Imagine a modest visitor, unused to public presentations, trying to frame a suitable reply for a gift presumably costing several shillings! Mother ends supposition by telling proudly how the family of ten gave sixpence each.

In this case inspiration came quickly enough to enable the visitor to accept them gracefully, and then sit at table and enjoy her share with the others. Everyone was happy, and Authority was not flouted.

Daisy has a dog expecting pups, and offers two in advance! Sarah produces a kitten from the coal cupboard, remarking naively, "I know the lady said she likes pussies, so I kept one for her."

Katherine is in bed ill. She feels around the large bug-infested mattress until she finds a bag of sweets, which she offers with the glad remark, "I kept them by, lady, 'cos I forgot to give them when you came last time."

Rebecca, an aged Jewess, makes a touching offer of a box of handkerchiefs for Christmas. The visitor explains carefully that gifts cannot be taken. "So sorry, lady," she murmurs regretfully.

"Never mind, Rebecca, I'll have them and give them back to you for Passover."

"Thank you, lady, you're so good," she smiles, and there ended an episode with an unseen gift.

David, the rag-merchant, makes sundry offers from time to time, varying from delicacies from his bag, high boots for wet weather, men's felt hats for remodelling, and even a bedstead he had picked up cheaply on his rounds.

Rose brings forth a gold bracelet, a family heirloom, because she considers the visitor has done more for her than her surviving relatives. A difficult refusal, strengthened by visions of family strife at her demise when the bracelet is missing!

In an area where Jews abound, the Passover festival means a constant supply of Matzos, varying from a sealed packet of good quality tea biscuits to some broken pieces taken from the table and wrapped in newspaper. To refuse means serious offence, and even in the filthiest home we accept, even though the stuff may be dumped into the next dustbin we find Matzos biscuits are a novelty, but our overflow needs another outlet. One way is to pass them to the first English person visited.

The end of the hop-picking season brings daily gifts of large highly polished apples, chosen and treasured for the lady.

Teaching in the home results in many a painfully home-made basket or knitted article.

Sweets, photographs of the family, a glass of wedding wine, these and a hundred more offers are made. Some give with generous abandon, others with the shyness of real affection.

Then there are those typical remarks as we make valiant efforts to refuse, "Go on; take it. It's just between you and me. I shan't open me mouth," etc., etc.

These varied tributes mean a terrific lot to the givers. They are valueless except in sentiment, so that it is unnecessary to offend by refusal unless suspicious of would-be bribery.

Common sense tells you when to apply (1) Acceptance, (2) Refusal, (3) Higher advice.

One popular tribute needs no second thoughts but quick action on the spot. When suspected (although it often comes suddenly) adopt the defensive attitude at once. For a resounding wet kiss is not usually enjoyable even to the most sentimental of lady visitors.

Potato Baskets and Scavenging Brooms.—

Attention was drawn at the Annual Meeting of the Norwich Institution for the Blind to the fact that several thousand potato picking baskets are being supplied throughout East Anglia each year, all of which are of value in assisting with food production. It is also interesting to know that road scavenging brooms made by blind workers are being used on almost every road in this area.

HOME NEWS

The Disabled Persons (Employment) Act.—A reminder is given to the blind and partially blind that the Register of Disabled Persons is now officially open.

We would strongly advise every blind person who is capable of employment to register at his or her local Employment Exchange, *whether at present in work or not.*

The person to ask for at the Employment Exchange is either the Men's or Women's Disablement Rehabilitation Officer, commonly known as "the D.R.O."

Dispatches of Braille Literature.—Dispatches of Braille literature from this country are now permitted to Bulgaria, Finland and Poland at Blind Literature rates up to the normal weight limit of 7 kilograms (i.e., 15 pounds).

Travelling Facilities for the Blind.—It has recently been laid down by the Railway Clearing House that the term "business purposes" as used in railway vouchers means "employment." These vouchers, therefore, can only be issued where a blind man or woman wishes to travel with a guide for some purpose connected with his or her job. This concession, enabling guides to be taken free in certain circumstances is a privilege given by the railway companies and unless care is taken that it is not abused, there is real danger that it may be withdrawn altogether.

When a blind person is making an application for a voucher, he should state precisely why he wants it, because the person who signs it is required to be satisfied of the applicant's good faith.

L.P.T.B. Concession Tickets for the Blind.—The concession tickets for use on the bus, tram and trolleybus services of the London Passenger Transport Board, now held by blind persons, are dated to expire on 31st December, 1944, and, in the ordinary course, blind persons who desire renewals would be required before the end of the year to submit their applications, duly certified by their Blind Associations. It is, however, felt that the considerable amount of work that would thereby be involved ought to be avoided at this time and it has been decided that the tickets at present in use shall be again regarded as available for another year, i.e., up to 31st December, 1946.

Southern Regional Association.—The Southern Regional Association for the Blind has issued a

Report of the Conference for Home Teachers on the Training of a Home Teacher held in London on 14th September. This will be reviewed in the next issue of THE NEW BEACON. Copies of the Report are available for the use of all home teachers and others on application to the Secretary of the Association, 14, Howick Place, Westminster, S.W.1.

On September 15th and 16th a Course for Home Teachers on the Nature and Prevention of Blindness, arranged by the Association, took place at the Royal Eye Hospital, London. There were lectures on the Anatomy of the Eye and Physiology of Vision—the World of the Blind—and on Principles of Treatment by Miss J. M. Dollar, M.S., F.R.C.S., and on the Prevention of Blindness by Professor Arnold Sorsby, M.D., F.R.C.S., a Clinical Demonstration by Mr. H. M. Symons and Miss M. Savory, and a Visit to a Children's Hospital, with a demonstration of diseases of the eye in children.

Thanks for Braille Censorship.—On the conclusion of wartime censorship, the National Institute for the Blind has been officially thanked for its scrutiny of all embossed correspondence and literature addressed overseas during the past six years. As the Braille dot system lends itself readily to the transmission of clandestine messages, it would hardly be overlooked by enemy agents. The N.I.B. censorship, conducted secretly, was intended to frustrate and catch any spies attempting to communicate by this channel.

East London School Reunion.—The bond of association of boarding school days is strong, and on September 8th it drew together a large gathering of former pupils of Northumberland House School (East London Home and School for Blind Children). Over 80 were present, some from quite distant parts, and with relatives and guides they were a very happy crowd, and spent a most enjoyable afternoon and evening in St. Matthew's Hall, Warwick Rd., Clapton, itself immediately recalling many memories of events held there, prize givings, Christmas parties, Gilbert and Sullivan operas and many more. The time before tea was spent in exchanging news and views with old companions, in most cases not met for years, and paying a rather sad visit to the war-scarred school buildings up the road, which could not be entered. But perhaps a ramble round the neglected and deserted ground was enough.

A warm welcome was extended to everybody by Miss E. N. Ridley, the former beloved headmistress of over 20 years standing, Mr. Moustardier, chairman of the School Committee still in being, and Mr. Slade, Hon. Treasurer, probably better remembered as Father Christmas. After tea, an extensive and varied repast, the Chairman introduced the speakers (although most of them were well-known to all): Miss Ridley, who included apologies from several who could not attend and remembered some who had passed on, two as a result of enemy action; Miss Pennington, a former teacher; Miss Thomas, likewise, who proposed a vote of thanks to the Committee for sponsoring such a grand occasion which was seconded by Eric Leary, past pupil; Captain Sudell, member of the Committee, who proposed a vote of thanks to the Vicar of St. Matthew's just across the way for the loan of the hall, seconded by Frank Bates, past pupil; Robert Pettifer, past pupil, who paid a very warm tribute to the memory of the school's best friend, Mr. William Law Gane, who passed away in 1942. This true gentleman, a staunch member of the Committee, was responsible for more happiness in the lives of the scholars than could be told. He will live in the hearts of all those who knew and cannot but remember him. It is a strange coincidence that his death took place about the time of the official closing of the school. His sister, also an old friend, was very fortunately able to be present and she spoke very movingly of her brother, and how he would have been delighted to meet everyone there again and would have been charmed with his old friends' babies. Musical entertainment during the evening was provided by former pupils.

Mention ought to be made of the fine model of St. Matthew's Church made by Captain Sudell in some six months while at sea, and presented to the school a few years ago. It was on show on a side table for the inspection of those who had attended many services in the Church during their youth. Its value is enhanced by the fact that the old Church has suffered very badly from bombs. It was made entirely from memory and is done in the greatest detail.

This Reunion was a great success and would seem to point the way for others, though with the old school no longer as a nucleus from which to derive new old students and fresh interest. "It was a great loss to the elementary education of the blind," says a past pupil, "when it was decided to close the East London Home and School—indeed, a home from home and the best of schools."

A King Aids a Blind Tobacconist.—David Bell, a Scottish soldier who lost his sight in the Battle of El Alamein, after attending St. Dunstan's has started a business as tobacconist in his home city of Edinburgh. A good stock of cigarettes is difficult to obtain in Scotland, but David Bell was given some assistance from an unexpected quarter in overcoming this shortage. King Farouk of Egypt, having been informed of the nature of Bell's injuries and the battle in which they were acquired, sent him 25,000 of the finest Egyptian cigarettes from his own supply.

Jewish Society's Proposed New Home.—At the Annual Meeting of the Jewish Blind Society last month, Mr. Edward A. Joseph, co-Vice-President, said that all their thoughts and energies must now be put into the establishment of their proposed new home. Thanks to the energies of Mr. Digby Solomon and Mr. Leslie Woolf, they had found a small beautiful estate, called Rokefield, Westcott, near Dorking, Surrey. It consisted of 10½ acres, comprising a well-stocked garden, a large house which, when the rooms were divided, would take at least 35 persons, a cottage in the garden, and two cottages in the village. The house was in a good state of repair. It was not large enough to accommodate all the blind people who had applied for admission, but there was plenty of spare ground available, and he hoped it would not be long before they could enlarge the building. It was very urgent that they launch their long-delayed appeal for the necessary money.

Rest Home for Huntingdon.—At the Annual Meeting of the Huntingdonshire Society for the Blind it was stated that the provision of a Rest Home was still very much in the minds of the Executive Committee, who were hoping to present a scheme which would have the support of the County Council.

A Common Phrase Criticised.—"We have to fight against that phrase which is frequently made—'the blind are doing well,'" declared Mr. Rex Furness, Chairman of the Warrington, Widnes and District Society for the Blind at the Annual Meeting last month.

Blind persons could never do well in the sense in which the remark was made, said Mr. Furness, and he suggested that the officials and voluntary workers should stress the point when they heard the phrase reiterated. The blind person, he added, always attempted to overcome his affliction, and relied upon the kindness and consideration of those who were more fortunate in possessing their sight.

The Society, with outside help, was doing

everything in its power to improve the lot of the blind person and those efforts were deeply appreciated.

A Happy Sojourn at "Long Meadow."—The Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind has just received an eloquent tribute to the work which is being done at Long Meadow, Goring-on-Thames, the home of Sir Beachcroft Towse, which he transformed into a Home of Recovery for War-Blinded Persons. "I have benefited enormously," writes Miss H, "from my stay, both mentally and physically. Throughout the activity of each day I was deeply touched with the personal interest and kindness shown to each one of us and the happy, dignified atmosphere which always prevailed. . . . I was much impressed with the patient, successful teaching of Mr. Bromley, who taught me to read Moon and now I am making good progress with Braille. I am also able to typewrite my letters. I am indeed very grateful for having been in such a happy home. The world is all the richer for having such a gentleman as Sir Beachcroft Towse, who is an inspiration to all he meets."

Happy End to a Braille Courtship.—A ten-year courtship by Braille, across 5,000 miles, ended in the village of Northill, Beds., on 25th September, when Mr. Christopher Marsom, who is blind, came back to his native village with the sightless American girl who will become his wife this month. Mr. Marsom and his brother-in-law stepped aboard the ship in which Miss Mary Mansfield had travelled from the U.S. On deck the pair clasped hands and said simply, "I'm so glad to see you."

Mr. Marsom will continue with his job as an electrical inspector in a works in Luton, and Miss Mansfield, when questioned on her plans for the future, said "I'm going to be a good housewife." She has been blind from birth and her future husband lost his sight in childhood through being struck by a tennis ball.

FOREIGN NEWS

An English Pupil at Perkins.—Jimmy Osborn, the ten-year old blind English boy who so captivated the members of the American Ninth Air Force when stationed in England, that they raised a fund to send him to America for his education, arrived in New York on the Clipper and proceeded to the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind, Watertown. He was given a tremendous welcome at the airport in New York and at Boston. He began the school year at Perkins and plans for his education are being worked out. "Jimmy," says *The Lantern*, the organ of Perkins, "has unique musical ability, a most winning personality and an alert and keen mind."

EMPIRE NEWS

The Steadfast Faith of Four Blind Lepers.—In the Ruanda Missions' Leper Colony at Kabale, Uganda, there are five blind lepers, four of whom are Christians. Dr. Leonard Sharp sends brief word-portraits of these four to the *Life of Faith*.

Yakobo has been on the island twelve years. He has been blind for three years and has only the stumps of his feet left. With the help of a friend and a stick he moves round a little, but at other times he crawls on hands and knees. His belief in the Saviour comforts him in hours of pain and sorrow. "I know," he said, "that He is preparing a place for me in Heaven."

Kisasa (the word means "pain") is a grey-haired woman of between 60 and 70 years of age. Recently she said to Dr. Sharp: "Jesus saved me two months ago. He took away my sins."

Leah is quite a young woman. She has said "My body is blind, but not my heart."

Adoniya is a young man who has been in the Colony for 15 years, stricken with an extremely severe form of leprosy. He has been a Christian for seven years, but since his blindness, which came upon him a year ago, his religion has become nearer and dearer to him. "I have no real home here on earth," he told Dr. Sharp, "my home is in Heaven."

THE BLIND GIRL

(Reprinted from "The Spectator" by kind permission of the author and editor.)

THEY tell me the leaves are green, the small trees pliant.
"See how they sway" they say—then pause and fidget,

and I can feel the ripples of their awkwardness breaking against the vulnerable shores of my mind. They tell me the grass is live and warm and short; now it lies lank and limp against my hand, I feel its weariness on a summer's day.

But flowers are good to touch and sweet to smell.

They tell me the nights are long and dark, unfriendly, and think it queer when I smile at them and their talk. How can they, who have smelt the clean night air after the unsable smells of day think that the night is alien? I know that darkness is a sweet and friendly thing. And I am happy. I touch and learn all day. I hear the clouds pass, and I smell the sun.

Only hidden pity makes me sad, when strong unspoken sympathy and love bring the knowledge that I am one apart. I am a blind girl, and I pity them. They are unsure, too wise, and too bewildered. They can see with their eyes; I with my mind. They search for things I know they will never find. What they search for I have deep within me; quiet knowledge, sweet and deep contentment—only such knowledge comes to the hurt, and the blind.

JUDYTH MONNICKENDAM.

A CLEAN BREAK WITH POOR LAW

By GEO. V. MAIDMENT

"HANGING back" might be the best expression to describe the attitude and conduct of certain people, institutions and authorities towards the interpretation and application of the laws governing Blind Welfare. The *Public Assistance Journal* continues to write up regular notes on the management of its former ward as though it were still the legal guardian's mouthpiece for addressing comment on the subject to its readers who are most particularly Poor Law officers. But here, let it be said clearly that the *Journal* is not being criticised; far from it, it is being commended. No one would begrudge it the right to include any subject it chose to publicise, and thanks are due to any journal that devotes some portion of its editorial time and its paper space to information about the progress of Blind Welfare. An even greater service is performed by the *Journal* showing up the special points of interest in the subject for its readers, which is an effective method of exposing the remaining ties between Poor Law and the Blind. Thus are we provided with a ready-made and accessible source of gleanings of the harvest which ripened to be removed forever from a field which could no longer yield satisfactory results. Nothing must be left to waste on that ground, or strike root there again.

Even allowing for the fact that provision is made for a wider circle of readers than Relieving Officers, it is significant that Blind Welfare is still related to the whole topic of Poor Relief, and even had the *Journal* not reminded us of this evil taint, the knowledge of it would find expression from time to time. The age-old association between the Blind and Poor Law persists, partly in harmony with legislation pulling away and partly in spite of it. This should be viewed with a critical eye. All overlapping should be carefully noted with a view to making finally a complete break. If necessary, amendments must be effected in the relative Acts to ensure that no confusion shall continue as to where the one begins and the other ends.

It can be taken for certain that Poor Law is still reluctant to relinquish its last hold on a social problem which it has encompassed for past ages. The spectre of Poverty is one of a family of horrors taken in hand by the old Poor Law system, for taming and control. It must be admitted in fairness that some impression was made upon the horrors but, in the

process of working on them, it was necessary to live with them, and the evils made as much impression on those who sought to master them as the officials made on the collected problems. Consequently, a partnership was formed, with as much total misanthropy in the social problems and the men and women co-partners as was hitherto confined to the unleashed spectres. Some of the men were monsters, feared more than the sufferings they were supposed to mitigate. The spectres of Poverty, Tyranny, Humiliation, Degradation and all the rest, are not easily displaced by the angels of Self-respect, Decency, Kindness and their throng. Indeed, replacement is not always preferred to transformation, which, at the best, is little more than the old team dressed up. Apart from conscious effort at embracing the new order of separate Blind Welfare, despite the good intentions, there is still the danger of "hanging back," with the weight of an old drag. The shaking off of the Poor Law is difficult, because a social service is a system within a bigger system of social life, and the two have a habit of growing and changing together, without materially altering their fundamental relationship. It follows that the tone of the charitable public services is decided by the whole economic set-up, especially its degree of prosperity. Then there are the old stagers, who have to justify their remaining years by a pretext of social service and importance. They boldly claim to be imbued with the spirit of the new age, with its higher human standards. The cost of their retirement might be cheapest in the long run.

In view of all departments of social organisation being parts of a whole, it is not easy to set them up like so many water-tight compartments. Liaison is necessary and infringement unavoidable at times. But in this matter of Blind Welfare every effort must be made to break away from its shameful attachment to the lowest social conditions that people can sink to, and having made the separation, to get right away and stay away. Between the two there must be no identification or direct association. Where the principal figure in any human drama is a Blind Person, then, from first to last, the direction must be in the hands of Blind Welfare. Poor Law cannot be allowed off stage. Yes, even when the Blind Person goes to an institution without reasonable prospects of returning home, the dependants must be maintained as

though the whole allowance previously made for them were the proportion of a state pension awarded to the group as a whole in respect of its blind leader. Within the life of the Blind Person, his qualification would thus preserve his position in his family and safeguard the family even from the improved ministrations of Poor Relief. The bringing of Blind Welfare into departments that also attend to maternity and child welfare is, of course, a strange freak

of organisation. That could only happen within the framework of local government arrangements; it could never emerge and grow up that way in a joint voluntary society.

It would be a good thing for THE NEW BEACON to become the one and only accepted mouth-piece of modern Blind Welfare for all authorities and officials concerned, and for it to become in every way worthy of its status as such.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

The Teaching of Upholstery.

Sir,—If I may, I should like to be permitted to put forward an idea, for what it may be worth, in the hope that its adoption may be considered and possibly put into effect. I do so as a professional upholsterer engaged in the teaching of the art to both blind and semi-sighted men.

From considered observation I cannot help but feel that it is a pity that this trade is not taught to blind boys in their schools in much the same way as carpentry is taught in normal sighted schools.

The ages of the men with whom I am at present engaged range from 19 to 39 years and it cannot help but be noticed that the urgency of time is less appreciated in the higher age group than it is at the lower end of the scale.

It would appear that amongst the older men the time taken to do a job is of no import just so long as a job is eventually finished. This is, of course, all wrong, especially as these men on completion of their training will be placed in factories alongside sighted men.

It was this problem of time that set me to wondering whether it would be at all possible to introduce the would-be upholsterer to his work at an early age and as part of his educational training.

Good upholstery is a highly skilled art and is worthy of any man. It can be done equally as well by a thoroughly trained, totally blind man as by a fully sighted one. The work has the additional merit of being done entirely by the fingers and hands, a unique position for that section of society so dependent upon their hands. If this statement should give rise to the fear that the work would rob the fingers of their sensitiveness to the reading of Braille let me set minds at rest by declaring that although I possess good sight and have been engaged in the

upholstery trade all my life I can read Braille by touch.

As I foresee it, my idea could be put into effect as a definite and recognised lesson in the educational curriculum. The problem of speed at the work would be solved by all the boys doing the same thing at the same time in competition with each other—a state of affairs not possible where great differences in ages has to be taken into consideration.

Those boys who showed an aptitude for the work and would like to take it up as a career on the completion of their schooling would be in a happy position and it might eventually be possible for them to attend a continuation school in order to become fully fledged tradesmen.

If in the course of what I have just written I have shown ignorance of how schools for the blind are run, and the laws governing them, then I beg to be excused. If, on the other hand, the idea contains the germ of possibility then may it find sanctuary, and be nourished in the right quarter.

Yours, etc.,

D. J. THATCHER.

To the Editor,

The General Public and the Blind

SIR,—The articles by "Tritone" are most useful. I do feel, with many others, that the general public know and hear far too little of the Blind. If I may make a suggestion, it might be a good idea for the N.I.B., or some other such organisation, to publish small leaflets about the Blind, their achievements and needs, which readers of THE NEW BEACON and other friends of the Blind could purchase at a reasonable price, and distribute in letters, etc. I would willingly dispose of about 100 copies.

Yours, etc.,

ANNE L. GRAY.

BLIND OUTLOOK

Extracts from letters written to the Braille journal "Progress"

News or Views ?

"... The *Braille Mail* is of value to us all as a news review. The fact, however, remains that it is a 'views' paper rather than a 'news' paper. Even one newspaper a week, in addition to the *Mail* would be a great boon."—S. F. J., London.

"... Is a daily newspaper practicable? The majority of the blind, as the majority of the sighted, would plump for the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Herald* or the picture papers, if they could see. Most of us are just averagely intelligent. We want to know what's going on not only in Parliament but at the seaside, in the police-courts, on the football ground, and what new dodge these scientists blokes are up to. In short, it's human interest we look for in our papers. A second paper of the comment and criticism type can be considered, but it's *News* we want first."—A. R. S., Peterborough.

"... I would like a paper three times per week, two editions to be from articles, news, etc., culled from London and English provincial papers, which might also embrace Northern Ireland, while the third edition would be an all-

Scottish one, all news, articles, etc., to be from Scots city and provincial papers. I have been a subscriber to the *Braille Mail* since 1926 and have read many references to Mayors and Aldermen, but only once seen the words 'Provost' and 'Baillie' mentioned in its pages."—J. K. U., Bangor, Co. Down.

Road Safety

"In view of the number of too-efficiently silenced engines returning to the road, people who depend on sound for their safety will be well advised to train their ears to wheel-tyre sounds."—B. G., Manchester.

Typewriter Service for the Blind

"... Couldn't there be a Typewriter Service? Only in London probably would such a plan be practicable, but in that large area the number of typewriter owners must be considerable. The inclusion of typewriting in the examination syllabus for Home Teachers suggests that many blind people own typewriters. If their mechanical skill is as elementary as mine they would surely welcome, from time to time, the help of someone 'on call.'"—J.D.K. (Solihull).

PERSONALIA

At the Annual Meeting of the Norwich Institution for the Blind last month, regret was expressed at the resignation of Mr. R. C. FANTHORPE, Superintendent and Secretary, who had accepted the mastership of the Great Hospital.

* * *

COUNCILLOR E. E. ASHTON, a member of Chester City Council since 1929 and whose keen interest in the blind is shown by his membership of the Executive Committee of Chester Blind Welfare Society and the Councils of the Northern Counties Association and the National Institute for the Blind, has been elected next Mayor of Chester.

* * *

Miss M. D. BAILE, Secretary of the Wiltshire Association for the Care of the Blind, is relinquishing this post after thirteen years of valuable service to the blind in the county, to take up an appointment with the Ministry of Works at Reading.

* * *

MR. F. B. BOX has resigned the Chairmanship of the Committee of the North London Homes for the Blind after many years' signal service in

that capacity and in every department of the work of the Homes. Mr. C. HAROLD VERNON has succeeded Mr. Box as Chairman.

* * *

At a social gathering last month members of the choir of Kirkgate Church of Scotland, Henderson Street, Leith, presented Mr. R. S. WILLIAMSON, A.R.C.O., with the musical works of Beethoven in Braille on the occasion of his resignation as organist and choirmaster.

* * *

Mr. Aneurin Bevan, Minister of Health, has appointed LORD RUSHCLIFFE to be Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind, in succession to LORD BLANESBURGH, who has resigned on account of ill-health.

* * *

Mr. HARRIS TURNER, Editor of the *National News of the Blind*, published quarterly by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, has resigned. "I have enjoyed gathering up the contents of this little periodical," he says in a farewell note in the last issue, "and I hope that it will continue to find a kindly welcome in the homes of all the blind people in the Dominion."

CIRCULARS AND CIRCLES

THE Ministry of Health has issued a Circular (158/45 dated 15th September) which is possibly the most obscure directive yet published in connection with Blind Welfare. It presents an arrangement made with the Ministry of Labour and National Service for the future employment of the blind. That is the sense of paragraph 1, but paragraph 5 states that the date from which the new Order will come into force has not yet been determined; it "will be announced in due course." It goes on to ask Local Authorities and Voluntary Agencies for the Blind to give facilities to the Ministry of Labour and National Service for the exercise of the functions indicated, and advises them that they should now look to that Ministry for advice and guidance in matters relating to employment. The functions in question are (1) those which properly belong to the Ministry of Labour and National Service under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, and (2) "such functions of inspection and supervision of workshops and home workers' schemes for the blind as are undertaken for the purposes of the Local Government Acts and the Blind Persons Acts"—which functions will be exercised by the Ministry of Labour "on behalf" of the Ministry of Health.

Paragraphs 2 and 3 are explanatory. Paragraph 6 states that except in the particulars specifically referred to "no alterations are being made in the arrangements for the welfare of the blind. Local Authorities will continue to have the duty of promoting the welfare of the blind both by the provision of employment and otherwise and, where they discharge any part of this duty by making contributions towards the cost of services provided by a Voluntary Association, they will continue to be responsible for ensuring that the services so provided are efficient. The Ministry of Health will continue to be the Central Department concerned with matters of welfare other than employment."

The substance of the explanatory paragraphs is that both Ministers consider that the problem of providing sheltered employment for the blind must, in the light of the responsibility conferred on the Ministry of Labour and National Service by the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, be co-ordinated with that of providing similar employment for other classes of the disabled, and that the Ministry of Labour's power to make grants to Local Authorities and to Voluntary Associations in respect of expenses incurred by them in the provision of employment facilities for the blind, must be interpreted as applying to facilities approved by that Ministry and therefore inspected and supervised by its officers.

It is understood that this Circular is of an interim character, and that it will be followed by some other pronouncement. Apparently it means that a change is coming and that Agencies for the Blind should be ready for it, and in particular should expect communications from the Regional Controllers of the Ministry of Labour to whom responsibility for sheltered workshops is being devolved. Local Authorities and Agencies for the Blind would be glad to be assured that Workshops and Home Workers Schemes will be inspected by one Ministry and not by two, and presumably there is ground for the suggestion that despite the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, the Ministry of Health will still theoretically have responsibility for inspection and supervision for the purposes of the Local Government and Blind Persons Acts. On the other hand, paragraph 6 seems to contradict both itself and the other paragraphs of the Circular. In what sense will Local Authorities still have the duty of providing employment? It would seem that their responsibility now stops at ensuring that every blind person for whose welfare they have responsibility shall be educated and trained and/or put within the range of the employment-providing agencies for which the Ministry of Labour is responsible. Further, how can local Authorities which make contributions towards an employment-providing service, ensure that the service is efficient? Are they to inspect and supervise on their own account or will they ask the Ministry of Labour (which is to inspect on its own account and on behalf of the Ministry of Health) to certify that the employing Agencies are efficiently conducted.

It is clearly desirable that Local Authorities and Voluntary Agencies should know with whom they have to deal and where the functions of one Ministry leave off and those of another begin.

Circular 158/45 does not meet that requirement. The legislation that now governs our work has drawn a clear distinction between employment and welfare. This Circular confuses it again. As general welfare, not employment, is now the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, that Ministry cannot apparently make any grant to a Local Authority for employment purposes. On the other hand, the Ministry of Labour has power to make grants both to Local Authorities and to Voluntary Societies for such services. It seems at least unlikely that the Local Authorities will incur costs for the employment of the blind which they cannot incur for the employment of other groups of disabled persons, solely at the cost of the Rates. But on that point there is still a further obscurity. No announcement has been made that the block grant is to be revised to allow for the transference of responsibility for employment from Local Authorities to the Ministry of Labour.

Most Whitehall circulars are lucid—at least to the patient reader. This latest example, which touches on matters of immense importance to Blind Welfare, is anything but lucid; one unkindly critic has said that it is an argument in a circle. Is it too much to ask the Ministry of Health to explain in simple language what it means, and the Ministry of Labour to say explicitly what it proposes to do?

THE FUTURE OF BLIND WORKSHOPS

An article by Tiresias, "Within the Meaning of the Act," in our August issue, stated a point of view on future responsibility for Blind Workshops. It has aroused some discussion, which was to be expected and was indeed desired, in so far as it contended that the progressive development of our Workshops is likely to be better secured under the Ministry of Labour than under Local Authority control. It was in some degree prophetic and one can't argue with a prophet, one can only disbelieve him; but the main objection we have heard to Tiresias's article is not that his forecast is dubious, but that he suggested that Municipal Workshops have been particularly uneconomic.

That is not, in fact, what he said. The argument was that the willingness of Local Authorities to meet trading losses, to adopt minimum wages and to augment earnings has resulted in depreciating the economic character of Workshops in general. Tiresias might, perhaps, have safeguarded this dictum by referring to the Workshops, too few in number, which have struggled successfully against pauperisation, and to the continuous effort of a number of Workshop Managers to keep their undertakings on the economic plane. That qualification, however, does not affect the main issue. Can Workshops for the Blind take advantage of war-time legislation and post-war conditions to regain economic character? May Workshop Managers look to the Ministry of Labour for an understanding of the proper character of Workshops for the Blind which Local Authorities in their generosity have not displayed? As we understand the criticism, it is that Workshops for the Blind are not really intended to be economic; they are rather welfare agencies intended to keep blind workers happily, but not too strenuously, occupied. To state such a point of view is, perhaps, unwittingly to caricature it. One view has been clearly stated, the other ought to be.

Among the readers of THE NEW BEACON are many people who have been concerned with the management of Workshops in the period between the Blind Persons Act of 1920 and the outbreak of the second World War. If any of them feel that justice has not been done to Local Authority control, the case for it should be made. Our pages are wide open to reply, and as crucial decisions in the matter of Blind Welfare are now being made, we particularly invite contributions on this matter.

THE EDITOR.

BLIND CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY IN WALES

THE idea of taking a party of seven blind children from the Sunshine Nursery School at Northwood, Middlesex, to Wales for a holiday was conceived when trying to think of some way to compensate those children who, for one reason or another, were unable to go to their own homes for the summer holidays.

Preparations, including the making of new clothes and bathing costumes, added to the joys of anticipation. Questions about the sea were

many and often difficult to answer, e.g., "Where does the sea go when it goes out?" And on one very wet day Michael said he was glad it was raining "so it would fill up the sea before we went to Wales."

Although the journey took over seven hours from door to door the children enjoyed every minute of it and did not seem to find it any too long. We were fortunate to have a small house in Mumbles, near Swansea, put at our disposal which was convenient in size and not too far

distant from the bay. As soon as we arrived, the children had a drink of milk, but were impatient to get to the beach straightaway, so we all hurried down without stopping to change our clothes. They at once set to work digging and making pies and castles, and Albert was most impressed because it did not matter about sitting in the sand with best trousers on!

The garden of the house was wild and uncultivated, and when on the first morning we told the children to go and play in the garden, Peter, who is the right hand man of our gardener at Northwood, said in a scornful tone: "Is this a garden?"

The children loved to look over the garden gate and talk to the passers by. One day a very old man passed, and Michael said: "Hullo, have you got any children?" "No," replied the man. "Well, what have you got then?" asked Michael. The old man laughed and passed on.

We visited the bakehouse one morning and saw the bread being made, while the crickets chirped merrily all round. The baker was most instructive, and after the dough had been covered he thoroughly questioned the children on the ingredients used and the method of making. A few days later, when we went to buy some bread, the children asked if they could go to the bakehouse to say "Good morning" to the baker. When they came back, Peter said: "The baker was in the van and he said 'Get out of the way, Sonny.' He shouldn't say that, that's rude." On inquiring what he should have said, Peter replied "Mind out!"

Two of the boys visited a chain works and were delighted to be allowed to help take a round iron rod out of the forge and hammer it flat.

Another day we all visited the farm, and the farmer let each child have a turn at trying to milk the cow.

One of the girls, who has had her vision improved by operation, went to the Anglo-Polish Ballet. She enjoyed the colour and movement and was interested in the stories portrayed. During a Polish "Faust" she asked many questions about Good and Evil, and on being told that no one was all bad and no one was all good, but that we were a mixture of both, her rejoinder was "What about devils, then?"

Wales treated us well over weather and we had only two wet days in three weeks. We were mostly able to spend long days at the bay, and we generally had a cooked meal when we came home in the early evening. The children thought it was something very special to have "dinner the wrong way round" as they put it.

I was surprised to see how quickly they

adapted themselves to new and entirely different surroundings and routine. The children with some sight loved rock-climbing and were very sure-footed and venturesome. Patricia, not yet four and totally blind, who recently came from our Northampton Home, insisted on walking up over 100 uneven steps from the beach entirely alone. She loved the sea and was completely fearless when the waves broke against her.

Although our times of rising and going to bed, of meal times, and our general mode of living, was entirely different from the ordinary routine of Sunshine House, the children quickly adjusted themselves and enjoyed the change. They were fit and well the whole time.

We often went for rides on the electric train, and one morning we went on Dodge 'em cars on the pier. Two of the boys had a car each alone, which they steered very expertly. They had a few bumps and I thought they would not want to go on any more, but on future occasions they begged to be allowed to go on, but the track was too crowded for it to be wise.

The children were fascinated when they found that if they dug a hole in the wet sand it would fill up with water. They spent endless time digging such holes, constructing walls, tunnels and canals, particularly when the tide was coming in. Rock pools were a source of joy and satisfaction and many were the hours they spent transporting water from them to holes they had dug in the sand. It was a proud day for Michael when he caught and picked up a crab himself. He almost wept when he was persuaded it was kinder to leave it in the pool than bring it back to Northwood.

Margaret, the eldest girl, was delighted because she was able to swim four strokes.

We were invited out to tea on VJ day, and all the children and all the adults dressed in fancy clothes and paraded round the garden and then played riotous games all the evening. We listened to the King's speech and then we joined in the village celebrations, with a bonfire and singing and dancing till 10.50 p.m.

The children said they liked V days because they had treats and they wanted to know when there would be more wars. When told that we hoped there would be no more, Michael said he would buy a gun when he was grown up just in case!

We were received with great kindness by everyone in the village, and many were the gifts liberally laid on our doorstep. The children were most amused by the Welsh accent and thought that the people spoke like that just for fun and tried to do likewise.

I think the children enjoyed it because they said they would like to stay in Wales for ever!

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

A Blind Sewing Machine Mechanic.—Mr. Naish, of Maidenhead, who for many years has run singlehanded a branch shop of Messrs. Singers Sewing Machine, Ltd., in that town, lost neither efficiency nor independence when his sight failed in later life. He is now 66. Fifteen years ago everything became very dim, and for ten years he has been blind.

Gradual loss of sight may be a help to adjustment, but its effects can be more depressing than a fairly sudden failure of vision. However, Mr. Naish never has time for self pity in his busy day. His clever fingers are continually active, mending sewing machines. His work became more difficult when Messrs. Singers put a new model on the market, but that did not defeat him. Not only did he master its mechanism, but the shop in Maidenhead has more sales of this machine to its credit than any other branch in Berkshire or Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Naish has learned to play the piano-acordion since becoming blind, and has memorised 200 tunes. He is much in demand at local parties and concerts, and during the last five years has performed on 94 occasions. He attributes his victory over blindness to perseverance and prayer.

Worcester College for the Blind.—The following recent successes are announced :—

School Certificate : A. C. Boddington, G. Causey, K. Hawksford, B. Hitchon, H. James, P. W. Malpas, G. E. Mosson, G. Nussbaum, B. T. P. Poole, N. Sedgwick, R. Wilkinson.

Endorsements : P. Fletcher, G. E. M. Hill, J. Wall.

Chorleywood College.—The following recent successes are announced :—

Higher School Certificate (Oxford) : Patricia Hart, Sheila Jennens.

School Certificate (Oxford) : Dorothy Cordingley, Joan Hyde, Josephine Janis, Jean Millward, Damaris Redman, Dorothy Anne Wheeldon; (*additional subject*) Mary Agar, Sheila Jennens.

Blind Musical Director for London Y.M.C.A.—David Buchan, the blind pianist, has been appointed Musical Director to the London Division of the Y.M.C.A. He is a musician of eminence and one of the first people to broadcast from Marconi House in 1922, and has since made successful appearances at the London studios. He has appeared at main concerts in London and elsewhere and has been commended

by the Press and by musicians. He has always shown a marked aptitude for improvisation; he can improvise in strict form on any given theme.

He first showed musical aptitude when he reproduced on the keyboard of a piano the tune of a popular song which had been whistled to him. At five he began to study music seriously under Miss Edith Dearsley, herself blind. Later he went to the Royal Normal College, and at 16 gained distinction at the London Musical Festival in the class for Pianoforte Solos, the maximum marks of 100 being awarded to him.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of :—

Mrs. Ann Courtney, who celebrated her 90th birthday in June. She was a notable blind figure in the ancient town of Bedlington, Northumberland, and until well over the age of 90 made her way to Church every Sunday morning. She was always cheerful and of an appreciative disposition. Possessing a wonderful memory, many were the incidents of an eventful life with which one was regaled on paying her a visit. In her very young days, she had the experience of crossing the Atlantic in one of the old sailing ships.

On her hundredth birthday, there was a party, when Ald. N. Garrow and officials of the Local Voluntary Committee were present and made Mrs. Courtney a presentation.

Miss Hannah Wilkes, as the result of a road accident. She had been blind since childhood and, though 63 years of age, she was weaving on the morning of her death, and had worked at her hand loom for over 40 years, seldom missing a day even during the war. She was trained at the Barclay Home for the Blind, Brighton, and before her death was the only survivor of the first batch of blind girls who came to the Barclay Workshops for Blind Women when they were opened in 1906. She lived with a blind sister in St. Marylebone, and walked to the workshop and back twice a day.

Charles Gregory Broan, of Malden, Surrey, aged 76. A blind musician, he was organist of the City of Westminster Institute for over 35 years and retired in 1935. Since then he had been teaching music privately. Although handicapped by blindness since the age of two, Mr. Broan had been a very active man.

Gordon Baker, a former Secretary of the Croydon Voluntary Association for the Blind.

He served as an officer in both the world wars, and was badly wounded in the first one. About three years ago he was seriously injured in a road accident at Brighton and never really recovered. Recently he had been working in Northern Ireland for a Services charity.

David Rees, of Dowlais, Merthyr Tydvil. One of the original members of the first Committee of the Merthyr Institution for the Blind, he worked unselfishly for over twenty years in the interests of the blind people of the borough. He became Chairman of the Institution and in 1940 was elected a Life-President. He was also a co-opted member of the Merthyr Corporation Blind Persons Committee.

Miss Sarah Ann Reavley, of Houghton-le-Spring, Durham, aged 73. She had been blind for more than 50 years. During the war she did a considerable amount of knitting for soldiers' comforts, and she was a devoted member of the local Mothers' Union.

Miss Catherine Jones, a native of Holywell, aged 79. She had been blind from childhood, and for many years was masseuse at the Lluesty Institution, for which work she was trained at the Blind School in Liverpool.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The Blind of Belgium

A brochure has just been published by the Institut Royal pour Sourds-Muets, Aveugles et Amblyopes, Brussels, which gives in pictures and letterpress a delightful account of an organisation which must be one of the most up to date in Belgium. The Institute is under the direction of religious orders and provides for about 60 girls, and nearly twice that number of boys. We are shown pictures of small blind children at work and play, of older boys and girls in gymnasium and playground, of the school orchestra, and of industrial trainees. The smallest of the children and the partially-sighted share a specially attractive block of modern buildings, flooded with light and air, and everywhere in all the pictures there is an impression of space and sunshine. Work in such institutions as that described must have been specially hard in the war years, and it says much for the enterprise of those responsible that so pleasing an account of the organisation should be published so soon after the end of hostilities.

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home

Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind.—

The 98th Annual Report shows that all branches of the work have flourished in the year under review. Despite evacuation difficulties, with three sections of the school in different places, there has been steady progress. Twenty-five pupils were successful in the Examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. The senior boys and girls are now back at Carpenter Road, while the kindergarten has been transferred to Lickey Grange. Country life has suited the children so well that it is hoped to send them all there eventually, though this will involve very heavy building costs. One hundred and fifty five blind persons have found employment in sighted industry, 42 of whom were previously classed as "un-employables." The Disabled Persons "Back at Work" Exhibition, held in Birmingham in September, 1944, gave an excellent opportunity for practical demonstration, and a shorthand typist, a piano tuner and a cartridge belt repairer from the Institution took part in it. Sales in Home Workers' goods and the Trade Department were up on the previous year. A new provision has been introduced in the workshops, which enables women employees to retire on pension at 60, though the retiring age for men remains 65.

Wakefield Voluntary Association for the Blind.

—The Report shows that, like so many other Societies for the Blind, the Wakefield Association is looking forward to having its new Home. Premises previously in the hands of the War Dept. have now been released, and a public appeal is to be launched so that they may be put into good order and accommodation eventually provided for 40 blind residents—together with other amenities of a social kind. Social Centres are an important feature of the Association's work.

Blind Welfare Association, Belfast.—The Association is able to record extension in a number of directions. More office accommodation has been secured, the number of home teachers increased, three new Local Committees formed, a register of border-line cases compiled, and arrangements are on foot for the setting up of a new training centre. The Organiser's Report describes many activities, and is lit by many of those personal touches which redeem an Annual Report from dullness. We read of a blind girl's

War Savings Group and faultless accounts kept in Braille, of many money raising efforts (including the sale of a doll's house—made by a blind ex-carpenter—for £56), of a handicraft competition, which led to the reception of 300 orders, and to a One-Day Shop which raised over £100 from the sale of garden produce and cakes.

St. John's Guild.—The Guild celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1944, but festivities were postponed till happier times. Miss Light who has given devoted service during the whole of the 25 years of the Guild's existence, first as its Treasurer and then as its General Secretary, has resigned her post, but remains Secretary of the Homes. A new Home is to be opened for the blind of the professional classes at Worthing. St. Raphael's Guest House at St. Albans has had a happy and successful year and some structural improvements have been made to the Home. Miss Langdon, the oldest resident, and at one time nurse to the late Archbishop of Canterbury, died; she had been a friend of the family for over sixty years.

Empire

Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

The effect of the war on welfare of the blind has been beneficial in many ways, says the Report of the Canadian National Institute. More openings for employment have appeared, more sympathetic understanding of blind problems has developed and more money has been given by a generous public. Increased funds have made it possible for the Institute to carry out a special project to take help to the Esquimaux, among whom defective eyesight and blindness are not uncommon. When the steamer "Nascopie" left this August bound for the far north, with the annual government expedition aboard, it carried, too, a travelling clinic of three eye specialists, led by Mrs. Moeller, head of the C.N.I.B. Prevention Department. Hudson's Bay Company officials and others were asked to arrange for Esquimaux needing eye treatment to assemble at one or other of the 12 Arctic posts on the ship's schedule.

Thanks to the representations of the Institute, an amendment to the income tax law has been passed, granting additional exemption to the blind in view of their extra expenses, and this has brought relief to a great number.

A description of the care and training of Canada's 63 blinded Services men occupies a prominent place in the Report. Of 18 men who have completed their training, four have become farmers, several are salesmen and others have secured executive and administrative posts.

The C.N.I.B. has a forward-looking programme

and in the service of the 13,414 registered blind of the country, hopes to expand its home teaching service and to increase its residential and recreational centres.

Foreign

American Foundation for the Blind.—This year the place of a formal Report is taken by "an informal portfolio of pictures"—pictures beautifully taken and showing educational, cultural and recreational activities of the blind. We see Helen Keller visiting a hospital for those injured in the war ("Her visit," wrote an army officer, "did more for the patients themselves than has that of any other visitor"), blind women as holiday guests of the Foundation bathing and boating on the Hudson River, blind men engaged on war orders, and a group of happy school children listening to talking book records designed to "take the place of the gay pictures which these blind children can never see." The end-pieces of the cover show by means of graph and diagram how the talking book records have grown in 10 years from 400,000 to 1,800,000 and how blind workers have produced almost 30 million dollars' worth of goods (mainly for the war effort) through National Industries for the Blind, under the ægis of the Foundation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

BRAILLE MUSIC. Dances.

The prices given are net.

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----|
| 19305 | Gay, N.—The Torrie on his Bonnet, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> | 6d. |
| 19306 | Styne, J.—Out of this World, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> | 6d. |
| 19303 | Sullivan, J., and Baron, P.—Rum and Li-mo-na-da, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> | 4d. |
| 19304 | Warren, H.—I wish I Knew, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> | 6d. |

BRAILLE BOOKS

Blind Institutions and blind individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covers.

History.—**History of Exploration from the Earliest Times to the Present Day, A**, by Brig.-Gen. Sir Percy Sykes K.C.I.E., C.B., C.M.G. The fascinating history, told by a distinguished living explorer, of man's discovery of the earth from the beginning of records to modern times, including the immortal stories of the Vikings, Marco Polo, Diaz, Da Gama, Columbus, Magellan, the Arctic and Antarctic Explorers from Willoughby to Scott and Shackleton, Captain Cook, Livingstone, Doughty and Philby of Arabia, and many more. 5 vols. (18398-402). 8s. per vol. F413.

Prodigious Caribbean, The, by Rosita Forbes. A history of the exploration and development of the West Indies—the Bahamas, Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Curacao, etc., and adjacent parts of the Central American mainland such as Panama, from Columbus to Roosevelt, told by a well-known woman traveller. 4 vols. (18552-5). 6s. 3d. per vol. F247.

Religious and Devotional:

Catholic Truth Society Booklets (produced with the kind assistance of the Catholic Truth Society):—

Opium for the People, by the Rev. Alexander Gits, S.J. Pocket size. 1 vol. (18704). 3s. F28.

Happiness of being a Catholic, The, by Mgr. M. Besson. Pocket size. 1 vol. (18708). 1s. 9d. F16.

Forthcoming Panda

No. 91. Phantom Lady, by William Irish. A most intriguing and satisfying piece of mystery fiction, set in New York, by a writer of polished talent. Spirax bound. 4 vols. (19291-19294). 2s. net.

N.I.B. BRAILLE ANNUALS.

Strictly limited editions of the following Braille Annals are being published early in December. Orders for copies should be sent now and will be met in strict rotation until the editions are exhausted. Cash should accompany order.

14295. Almanac, 1946. 10d. net.

14292. Calendar, Pocket Date, 1946. 2d. net.

19343. Christmas Annual, 1945. 6d. net.

14293. Diary, 1946. Large size, 6½ in. by 5 in. 2d. net.

14293. Diary, 1946. Small size. 5 in. by 4 in. 1½d. net.

14298. Scripture Text Calendar, Daily, 1946. 1s. net.

14297. Scripture Union Portions, 1946. 3d. net.

APPARATUS

The price of the following article is increased as from 20th September, 1945: Cat. No. 9279. Chessmen Merrick. List price, 15s. Special price to blind individuals in British Empire, 10s.

NOTE.—The reduced—special—price of all apparatus supplied by the National Institute for the Blind applies only to blind individuals resident in Great Britain and the British Empire. Institutions for the Blind, both at home and abroad; all persons other than blind individuals; and all persons, including the blind, resident in foreign countries, must pay the list price.

Competition for Home Teachers.

A Prize of £5 5s. is offered by the National Institute for the Blind for the best essay submitted by a Home Teacher on the subject *Apparatus for the Blind: How far it meets present needs, and suggestions for (a) its improvement, and (b) possible new apparatus.*

The following conditions should be observed:—

Essays should not exceed 2,000 words in length, and should be typewritten, on one side of the paper only. They should bear a *nom-de-plume*, and be accompanied by a sealed envelope containing the name and address of the competitor, and marked on the outside with the *nom-de-plume* given on the essay.

Entries to reach the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1, not later than December 31st, 1945. Please write "Apparatus Competition" on the top left-hand corner of the outer envelope or wrapper.

The object of the Competition is to bring to light any requirements of the blind for apparatus which are not being met satisfactorily or at all. The prize will be offered annually provided a sufficient number of satisfactory entries are received.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES

STUDENTS' LIBRARY

	Vols.
Philosophy:	
Halévy, E. The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism	11
Theology:	
Deane, A. C. The World Christ Knew	2
Mackay, J. A. Heritage and Destiny	2
Peake's Commentary on the Bible—II: Introduction to the Pentateuch and Commentary on Genesis	3
Social and Political:	
Lenin, V. I. State and Revolution	2
Niebuhr, R. The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: Vindication of Democracy and Critique of its Traditional Defenders	2
Pares, Bernard. Russia and the Peace	4
Raman, T. A. India (The World To-day Series)	2
Shaw, G. B. Everybody's Political What's What	7
Economics:	
An Analysis of the Sources of War Finance (1938-1943). White Paper, 1944 (Cmd. 6590)	1
Science:	
Farrington, B. Greek Science: Its Meaning for Us (Thales to Aristotle)	2
Literature:	
<i>Poetry</i>	
Turner, W. J. (ed.) Eighteenth Century Poetry: An Anthology	3
French:	
Aragon, Louis. Le Crève-cœur et Les Yeux d'Elsa	2
Marie de France. Fables, ed. Ewert and Johnston	2
Classics:	
Cicero. Pro Rege Diotero	1
Horace. Satires, Book II, ed. Gow	4
Biography:	
Hamilton, Lord Frederic. My Yesterdays: Vanished Poms	4
Shaw, Bernard, His Life and Personality. By Hesketh Pearson	8
Collective Biography:	
Bacharach, A. L. (ed.) Lives of Great Composers—I. From Byrd to Haydn: The Classics	
Miscellaneous:	
Hindus, Maurice. Mother Russia	7
Current Affairs (for temporary circulation only)	
Bowley, M. Britain's Housing Shortage. "British Survey." Borneo.	
Cech, J., and Mellon, J. E. Czechoslovakia	2
Thomson, D. French Foreign Policy.	

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND, NORTHERN BRANCH, 5, St. John Street, Manchester, 3. Winter Lectures

The Committee of the Northern Branch of the National Library for the Blind has arranged three popular lectures to be held in the Theatre of the Central Library, Manchester, at 7 p.m. on:—

Friday, November 16th, Mr. F. Sladen-Smith,
Modern Drama.

Thursday, December 6th, Dr. T. Fish, **Impressions of a recent visit to Italy.**

Friday, February 7th, Mr. F. Shuttleworth,
Adventures in West Africa.

The Committee cordially invites everyone to the lectures.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1S. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5S.)

Lessons given in Dietetics by correspondence. For particulars apply to Robert Malton, 18, Claremont Road, Folkestone.

Experienced Certificated **HOME TEACHER** seeks re-engagement. E.M., c/o Editor, THE NEW BEACON, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND OF NEWPORT AND MONMOUTHSHIRE.

Applications invited for the position of **Supervisor (Sighted)** for Round Machine Knitting Department. Five employees. Hostel accommodation available. Applications to Secretary, 199, Chepstow Road, Newport, Mon.

WILTSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR THE CARE OF THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of Secretary to be sent to the Secretary, Wiltshire Association for the Care of the Blind, 13, Market Place, Devizes, with two recent testimonials, not later than 31st October, 1945. Salary according to qualifications.

WELFARE CLUB ORGANISER. Sighted female, of Home Teachers' Certificate standard, with ability and preferably experience in such work, required to organise and supervise the Institution's Day Time Club for the Blind. Applications, with particulars and stating salary required, should be made to the undersigned:—

A. C. V. THOMAS,
Superintendent and Secretary,
Royal Midland Institution for the Blind,
Chaucer Street,
Nottingham.

WARRINGTON, WIDNES AND DISTRICT SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND.

Appointment of Superintendent and Secretary.

Applications are invited for the post of Superintendent and Secretary at a salary ranging from £300 to £400 per annum plus War Bonus.

The commencing rate to be determined according to qualifications and experience.

Applications, together with three recent testimonials, to be addressed to Stuart F. Allison, Medical Officer of Health, Health Department, Sankey Street, Warrington, immediately.

NORTHERN COUNTIES ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Training Course for Prospective Home Teachers.

The Annual Training Course organised by the above Association will be held, commencing about the middle of February, 1946, and occupying a period of six weeks. Approval of the Association must be obtained before admittance to the Course, and candidates must not be less than twenty-one years of age on the date of the 1946 Examination, which they must undertake to sit. Subsistence grants and travelling expenses will be paid on behalf of approved candidates residing within the Association's area.

Details and forms of application may be obtained from the Secretary, Northern Counties Association for the Blind, 17, Blenheim Terrace, Leeds, 2.

HOME TEACHERS' EXAMINATION, 1946. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

WANTED. Dubied, Harrison or Foster Flat Machine on metal stand; 7 needles per inch; not less than 32 inch needle bed, racking over 3 needles. Must be certified in first-class working order. State price and cost of packing and delivery on board ship. Replies to be addressed to the Principal, The Athlone School for the Blind, Kassel's Vlei Road, Bellville, C.P., South Africa.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (TOWN AND COUNTY) ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the permanent position of female Home Teacher for the Blind. Applicants should be able to drive a car, which will be provided. Salary according to qualifications and experience. Application to the Secretary, 25, Gray Street, Northampton, with copies of three recent testimonials.

LIVERPOOL HOME TEACHING SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND require a certificated female Home Teacher, salary £156 per annum, plus war bonus 18s. 6d. per week, rising to £208 per annum. The person appointed will be required to contribute to Superannuation Fund. Apply immediately, stating age, experience and qualifications, with copies of two recent testimonials, to Hon. Sec., Cornwallis Street, Liverpool, 1, marking envelope "Home Teacher."

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL.

Home Teachers of the Blind.

Applications are invited from sighted persons holding the Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind, for the posts of female Home Teachers of the Blind, at a salary within the scale £200, rising by annual increments of £12. 10s. to £250 a year, plus a war addition at the rate of 18s. 6d. a week, and an allowance for subsistence of £12 a year. The commencing salary will be fixed according to qualifications and experience.

The appointment will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Candidates should preferably be able to provide and drive a car, for which an allowance on the County Scale will be paid.

Applications in candidates' own handwriting, stating age, qualifications and experience, with copies of two recent testimonials, should be sent not later than the 31st October, 1945, to the Executive Officer, Blind Welfare Service, County Hall, Maidstone, from whom any further particulars required may be obtained.

W. L. PLATTS,
Clerk of the County Council.

County Hall, Maidstone.

October, 1945.

The New **BEACON**

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WITH THE BLIND in LIBERATED GREECE

By ERIC T. BOULTER,

Industrial Employment Officer, National Institute for the Blind.

WHEN the Director of Relief Operations for the European Regional Office of UNRRA was in Greece earlier this year he was struck by the fact that very little existed in the way of welfare services for the blind in that country and that employment among this section of the Greek people was completely non-existent. UNRRA was, however, able to do very little about it since they had not on their staff anybody who had previously had experience in the specialised field of Blind Welfare and who could advise the Administration concerning the potential abilities of the blind and the most effective method of initiating a programme that would give the blind the opportunity they desired and so richly deserved.

On his return to London, therefore, the Director got in touch with the National Institute for the Blind, and after some preliminary discussion it was arranged that I should spend some two or three months in Greece, on loan to the UNRRA Mission in that country. During my stay I was to be responsible for drawing up such a programme, particularly in the field of employment, assessing the need for apparatus and equipment, and make as much progress as possible in the short time at my disposal.

In this short article I cannot hope to give full details of what was accomplished, neither can I give details of my report to UNRRA Headquarters. That document fills many typed sheets of foolscap, and though I think that much of its matter would be of interest to the readers of this publication (and would, no doubt, lead to a certain amount of controversy) space does not permit of its re-issue in these columns.

Some of you may, however, be interested in a personal account of my journey, some impressions of the country and recollections of some of the people I met and conditions in the Blind Welfare world as I found them on my arrival and during my stay in Greece.

I left England early in July, following some weeks of preparation for the journey, including the usual round of inoculations, vaccination and general immunisation, and documentation for the passage. Air Transport Command of the United States Army Air Force were to carry me to Athens, and we took off from Bovington Airfield late at night. The outward journey was memorable for

three particular thrills, the first of which was to be delivered in three "helpings." We crossed the centre of London on the first night of the city's full illumination after six years of total or partial blackout. That was a sight which I shall never forget. Below the wings and fuselage of the plane, and as far as one could see in all directions, there spread out a fantastically beautiful "spider's-web" of lights, widely spaced at the periphery, but merging to a vivid, closely-packed brilliance which identified the West End. One really could imagine that all roads in the world led to Piccadilly Circus. An American Army Major at my side murmured, "Boy, that's really something to write home about."

The second thrill was of an entirely different type. As we crossed the English Channel our starboard engine coughed, spluttered, choked and finally cut out altogether. The propeller circled more slowly and stopped. The American Steward switched his chewing-gum to the other side of his mouth and casually announced "We'd better go back for another ship." So, an hour after taking off we found ourselves back once more at Bovingdon, seeking another plane, which soon took off to carry us on our way towards Naples. This little incident allowed us two repeat performances by the Lights o' London, which we all greatly appreciated.

Through the night we flew, with stops at Paris and Marseilles, but with the arrival of the dawn I found my third thrill. We flew low over Rome as the multi-coloured sky behind the hills to the East of the city illuminated its magnificent buildings. A breath-taking sight.

On to Naples, and 24 hours' delay there, with time to have a look round the city. We were just getting used to the smell when we left! And so to Athens, and my work for the blind in the liberated country of Greece.

Before leaving England I had decided that the first few days or weeks of my stay should be devoted to making contact with any Greek workers for the blind who were either active at present or who had been engaged in such work in pre-occupation days. In actual fact this job was completed in one morning. The only active Blind Welfare project in pre-war days in that country had been a school for the blind near Athens which was now endeavouring to recover from the effects of the occupation and the Civil War of last December, during which the building had been damaged by a large calibre shell from a British field gun. During that morning's work I met the principal of the school, Miss Papadapoulou, whom I was later to get to know very well indeed. I also called on Madame Irene

Lascaridi, a former principal of the school, now helping as far as she was able by giving shelter to a small number of homeless blind girls.

It quickly became apparent that there existed in the country no idea that the blind could be usefully and gainfully employed. It had been, and continued to be, accepted that the only practical vocation for the great mass of blind persons was the field of music. The school for the blind laid very great emphasis on this side of their educational service, and as a result most of their pupils on leaving school were forced to resort to playing their violins or flutes or banjos in the streets or cafés in an effort to scrape together some form of livelihood. I am happy to say that during my stay I was able to educate those in authority to a more reasonable condition of thought on this subject, and when I left, the first vocational training workshop for the blind ever to be established in Greece was flourishing, with two excited, happy groups of people receiving instruction from experts in the trades of fish-net making and chair-caning and rush-seating. These workshops were established with the help of the American Near East Foundation and the Greek Government, these two co-operating with UNRRA to the very limit of their ability to make the project a complete success.

Greece is not an industrial country, and the tendency in the field of employment throughout the country is for necessary articles of furniture, household utensils, trade equipment and the like to be made by craftsmen in their own homes, the inhabitants of the villages and districts buying their goods direct from the craftsmen. We were quick to seize the advantage of this state of affairs, and designed our training workshops to provide training to blind people who could, on completion of the training course, be provided with necessary equipment and return to their own homes to practise their trades. I am convinced that this scheme will prove to be a complete success, and everything is ready for the considerable expansion of the scheme. Full use was made of the UNRRA network of workers throughout Greece for the submission of suitable trainees from all provinces of the country, and free accommodation and food is available to them near the training centre.

The standard of education at the school, and capacity within its walls, had been improved. Here again UNRRA provincial workers are arranging for the transportation and reception of large numbers of blind children to Kalithea, where they will receive the education they so badly need.

Plans are in hand for the improvement of the country's ophthalmic medical service, and so it is hoped to reduce the incidence of blindness in the country, which, as a result of years of privation, and the numerous accidents with land-mines, grenades and anti-personnel bombs, is at present very high.

It is significant, I think, that even those in closest touch with the blind had no idea as to the number of blind persons in the country. Mrs. Lascaridi, who has been working in one capacity or another on behalf of the Hellenic blind for nearly forty years, hazarded a guess at 2,000. The Ministry of Hygiene suggested "not more than 4,000." As a result of information received from UNRRA Medical workers, who supplied details called for in a questionnaire I prepared, it has now been established that there are at least 12,000 blind persons needing assistance, and even this figure can in no way be regarded as complete.

As an interim measure, and to ensure that the blind do at least obtain the essentials of life, arrangements have been made for Public Assistance to be granted to them under the provisions of a new law passed in August, and meanwhile a competent Blind Welfare machine is being built, and the cogs oiled, to ensure an improved standard of life for the blind throughout the Greece of to-morrow.

And what of the people I met? There can be no doubt that the broad masses of the people of Greece are bound by strong ties of loyalty and affection to the people of Britain. My interpreter, a young Greek girl, spent many months in a German prison camp during the occupation after being captured by the Gestapo as she helped British soldiers to flee the country. Everywhere I went I met people who had risked life and home and everything they held dear to assist these British troops to rejoin their units after the bitter but fruitless campaign in Greece in 1941.

One of the most touching incidents during my stay—and I unashamedly confess it brought tears to my eyes—occurred during my visit to the little hostel of Mrs. Lascaridi. As I examined some of the work of her few blind girl guests they silently formed up into a line and at a signal burst into the British National Anthem, sung in English. Their sincerity was obvious and unaffected. At the conclusion of the Anthem their leader presented me with a piece of paper that I shall always treasure. Printed on it in sighted capitals (done with the aid of a Braille frame) were the words, in Greek, "Long live Britain, our liberators. Thank you for coming across the sea to help us now. We shall always remember you."

That incident, and hundreds of others like it, made me realise more than ever the great obligation we owe to our Allies across the water. In the past the blind of Greece have had little to look forward to. Their lives have been bleak and cheerless. Now there is a chance that we can help to open up to them bright new fields of possibility. Many of them have given their sight in the Allied cause. Here in Britain we have a welfare service for the blind which, though by no means perfect, is second to none in the world. We must share it with our friends. We must draw upon our unequalled experience to aid those who have never had the same chance as ourselves. The Europe of the post-war era must grow to be a peaceful, happy community. We have to play our part in our own specialised field.

And so back to England. Glorious memories to carry with me, and some satisfaction in the knowledge that my stay in Greece has not been completely without effect.

Back to England, But to those left behind in Greece to carry on the work I say, "Go forward, and good luck attend you—my thoughts are with you too."

FOREIGN NEWS

Free Correspondence Courses for Belgian Blind.

—The current issue of the Belgian Braille magazine, "Union," contains an interesting account of co-operation between the blind and the seeing. An organization called "Auxilia," catering for the welfare of invalids in general, conducts free correspondence courses, which it throws open to the blind as well. The courses are planned and written by "Auxilia," while the Ligue Braille transcribes them into Braille for blind students, whose own written work is then typed out to be passed on to the "Auxilia" teacher. It is claimed that this experiment is unique, and emphasis is laid in the article on the personal satisfaction gained by the blind student from the knowledge that he is learning, not in isolation, but as a member of a team. In a competition in Arithmetic and Modern Languages, which was held this year, a blind candidate gained first place in elementary French, and three blind entrants tied for first place in advanced English. In German, a deaf-blind entrant was first.

Norwegian Blind Helped Beat Nazis.—Blind persons allowed by the Germans to keep their wireless sets helped the Norwegian resistance movement by transmitting the latest news in Braille during the occupation. The Germans never found out.

HOME NEWS

Postal Regulations.—Despatches of Braille literature are now permitted to Holland, Italy (including the Vatican City), and Greece, at blind literature rates up to the normal weight limit of 7 kilograms (i.e., 15 lbs.).

Changes of Address.—The following have been notified :—

Henshaw's Institution for the Blind has returned to Old Trafford, Manchester, from Hardwick Hall, Ellesmere, Shropshire.

The *Brighton School for Blind Boys* has returned to 179, Eastern Road, Brighton 7.

The address of the *Gloucestershire County Association for the Blind* is now The Haven, Bournes Green, Stroud.

The *Linden Lodge School for the Blind* has returned to Bolingbroke Grove, Wandsworth, S.W.11.

Unbreakable Plastic Eyes.—Mr. Paling, Minister of Pensions, on his visit last month to the Optical Appliances Section of the Ministry's headquarters, near Blackpool, saw the production of the first plastic eyes, made by specially trained members of the staff. These eyes are unbreakable. A specimen Mr. Paling saw thrown against a wall was recovered undamaged. Three girls, chosen for their appreciation of colour values, make the iris of each eye, which has been matched to the individual's requirements.

Progress at Preston.—At the annual meeting of the Fulwood Homes and Workshop for the Blind, Preston, it was stated that owing to the decrease in total blindness among young children, greater care is being given to those who are partially sighted and, for the purposes of their education, the Fulwood Homes for the Blind has, under the new Education Act, become The Preston School for the Partially Sighted and Institute for Blind Welfare.

Mr. J. K. Booth, chairman, said "The new venture will be carefully watched by the Ministry of Education and other concerned authorities. We hope to make it a great success. We have ambitious plans for enlargement and hope to make it one of the finest schools in the country." Mr. Booth added that alterations were going on at the present time and there was still much to do in connection with the reorganisation of staff to meet the new development.

Sir William Ascroft, in thanking donors and subscribers, said it was no secret that the future

of the school had been in jeopardy, but fortunately the progressive step had been carried out, not only with the approval of the Ministry, but with the hearty approval of the local authorities. During the 77 years of its existence the institute had received the confidence of the public and he hoped that would be maintained.

It was intended to modernise and extend the premises, said Sir William, to have their own social centre, where the older blind people could be entertained and enjoy life.

A Liquid Level Indicator.—A device enabling a blind person to gauge either the amount of liquid in a receptacle or to pour in liquid to a predetermined level has been designed by the National Institute for the Blind. It is made of plastic, and measures 2 ins. long and $\frac{5}{8}$ in. diameter. At one end there is a thimble with a small hole at the base through which an extension to a float housed in the other end can rise.

The user of the device slips the thimble on to the finger in the usual way, making sure that the tip of the finger is at the bottom of the thimble. The indicator is then placed in the receptacle and as soon as the float is pressed down against the liquid, it rises and can be felt against the finger tip. Alternatively, the device is held in a receptacle at a predetermined height and the liquid which is being poured in raises the float and so warns the user that the required level has been reached.

Before placing this device on the market, the Institute wishes to get some idea of the extent of the demand for it. All interested are invited to write to the Secretary General, National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, W.1.

Worthing Town Council Over-Ruled.—As a sequel to the dispute, previously reported in THE NEW BEACON, over the purchase of 107, Marine Parade, Worthing, a former guest house on the sea front, by the Metropolitan Society for the Blind for use as a Holiday and Convalescent Home for Blind Persons, the Town Council has, according to the *Worthing Gazette*, received an Instrument from the Ministry of Health which over-rules its decision to refuse the sale of the premises to this Society.

The Instrument was accompanied by a letter from the Ministerial Department to the following effect :—

"The Minister has considered the report of his Inspector who heard the appeal made by the Metropolitan Society for the Blind against the decision of the Borough Council refusing consent for the use of the house, No. 107, Marine Parade, for the purpose of a Holiday Home for Blind Persons, and has issued an Instrument granting permission for the said user, subject to due compliance with any local acts, regulations, bye-laws or general statutory provisions in force in the Borough."

Tribute to the White Stick.—Dr. C. Mooring-Aldridge, during the course of his remarks at the Annual Meeting of the Bournemouth Blind Aid Society, said that the white stick which blind people carry must have often saved their lives. Mr. L. V. C. Homer, Hon. Secretary, said: "Any work we do for the blind people we do not do for any reward. We simply do it to help those people and when one sees them all the happier for what one has done, for my part, I feel that it was well worth while."

Entertainment by St. George's Club for the Blind.—A most enterprising evening's Entertainment was given recently by the St. George's Club for the Blind, at Christchurch Hall, Dartford, all those taking part being either completely or partially non-sighted. Two plays were enacted, "Cottage to Let" and "The Old Geyser." The actors showed great understanding of what was required of each character, and displayed an excellent team spirit throughout. In many parts of the Hall was the question heard: "Can they really not see?"—so natural were the movements on the stage. Solos were sung by Miss Doris Harwar, A.R.C.M., L.R.A.M., and Miss Margaret Odd played the accordion. Members of the Club also showed exhibits of their handwork, and gave demonstrations of Braille and Moon reading, Braille Writing, Braille Shorthand and Typewriting and Talking Books.

During the evening Miss M. Abberton (Home Teacher) told of the foundation of the St. George's Club in 1942, and how it has since helped many blind people to forget their loneliness and to find friendship through the weekly meetings. It has now 40 members. Miss G. Jefferd, one of the Club members, spoke of the difficulties the non-sighted have to face, suggesting that the Club is well named St. George's, since all its members have many dragons to overcome. She explained that it was their aim to help with the establishment of a Guest House for the Blind, which those with no homes may use as a residence, and others as a holiday home. Such a house has been bought for Kent in Ramsgate, but a considerable sum of money is required for its equipment and endowment, and

Miss Jefferd made an appeal for its support. As a result of the evening's entertainment, £29 was handed over by the Club for this purpose.

A New Appeal Film.—A successful appeal film is no easy thing to produce. In the short space of five minutes a long story has to be told—and told, moreover, not in kaleidoscopic fashion, but smoothly, so that the audience is left with a clear final impression. The National Institute's Appeal film for 1945, "I Think of You," has all the right ingredients skilfully blended to produce a successful result.

We see, first, some of the blind babies at one of the Nursery Schools. Clad in charming play suits they explore the delightful grounds, play with toys, or copy the grown-ups with appropriate earnestness in a "washing up" game. One senses all the time the happy quality of the life they lead despite their handicap. Scenes from Chorleywood College reveal the same sturdy independence and enjoyment of life. A girl works out a geometry problem, using a special ridge-cutting compass. Children streak through the swimming pool and splash and revel as easily and joyously as any sighted youngsters. It is the same story at Worcester College, where boys are shown rowing on the river, swinging on ropes in the gymnasium and even doing a perfect high jump. Older people's pursuits are not overlooked. At a Residential Home blind chess players are seen keenly concentrating on the game, and in their own homes, master craftsmen making baskets with confident dexterity. The newly-blind learn to move freely by themselves in the gardens of a Home of Recovery.

The excellent photography, combined with the attractive voice and sincerity of Stewart Granger, the well-known film star, who gives the commentary, make this an outstanding production.

EMPIRE NEWS

St. Nicholas Home, Penang.—The following news of the St. Nicholas Home for the Blind, Penang, has reached us in a letter from Corporal J. E. S. Francis:—

"I am pleased to say I found all at the Home in high spirits, and very much relieved that they are once again free to carry on in their normal way again. However, they do not appear to have been treated too badly by the Japanese, and their main loss was the internment of Miss Sherwin and Fr. Scott, who was confined in the Home with them before being taken to Singapore. They were, of course, not allowed to speak or be taught English or have anybody visit them, but as appears to have happened in

November 15th, 1945

many places, these things have been secretly carried on.

"There are at present 33 children in the home, all of whom are quite well, and growing up in good Christian surroundings, and I have not seen a more well mannered set of children for a long time. Each time I visit them I have the greatest difficulty in getting away, and only do so by promising to go again the next day or day after.

"As you can imagine, they are in great need of new Braille books. The latest 'School Magazine' they had was for September, 1941, and they are all eager to know if this is still published."

CARE OF THE BLIND IN U.S.S.R.

By YEVGENIA AUGUSTINOVICH

In the June 15th, 1944, issue of THE NEW BEACON, we gave an account of the Russian blind in War-time, dealing especially with the training of the war-blinded by the All-Russian Society for the Blind. The following article, reprinted from "Soviet News" by kind permission of the Editor, gives a general picture of work for the blind in Russia to-day.

IN the Soviet Union, to be blind is not to be cut off from the social and productive life of the community. Through the Society for the Blind, founded in 1922 on the initiative of a group of blind people living in Moscow, the state attends to the everyday needs of the handicapped, and finds work for them.

A person afflicted suddenly with blindness usually goes through a phase of deep despair. At this stage help comes from members of the Society for the Blind. They call to see him, they introduce him to other blind people who have already adapted themselves to their new conditions of life, they find out his tastes, desires and abilities, they prove to him that he is not helpless, and they get him a job.

The annual income of the Society for the Blind is close on twenty million roubles, derived from allocations made by the social insurance and public education departments of the state, profits from the Society's workshops, and membership dues. Any blind person aged sixteen or over can be a member.

The supreme authority of the Society for the Blind is the Congress of the Blind, convened at least once in two years. A central board supervises the activities of the 395 local organisations and the 71 departments of the society in the various regions and republics.

The Society's main object is to train its members for suitable work. It helps them to acquire a trade or profession, and finds employment for them in workshops, co-operatives, factories and offices, and on farms. It runs clubs, rest-rooms, libraries, schools and classes.

Lord Wavell at St. Dunstan's, India.—Last month, the Viceroy of India (Lord Wavell), who was accompanied by Lady Wavell, paid a visit to the St. Dunstan's in India, at Dehra Dun. They were received by Lt.-Col. Sir Clutha Mackenzie, Officer-in-charge at St. Dunstan's.

This branch of St. Dunstan's was established at Dehra Dun during the past 18 months, and there are between 70 and 80 men in training there. Nearly all of these men are of the Indian Forces, who have played so magnificent a part on the Far East and Near East and Western fronts.

It publishes literature for the blind. This year it has set aside nearly seven million roubles for cultural work. It also collaborates with the public health authorities in measures for the prevention of blindness.

More than 10,000 blind persons have been placed in jobs by the Society. Some are skilled metal-workers—drill, press and turret lathe operators, fitters and assembly hands. Many make felt boots, inner soles, mattresses, furniture, stockings, scarves, skirts and blouses, baskets, wicker furniture, mats, rope and stationery. The plastics industry employs a number. There are jobs the blind can do on the state and collective farms.

A blind man can produce fine parts on a turning lathe with marvellous skill. His senses of hearing and touch are so highly developed that he can judge the slightest deviation by sound alone, and test the precision of his work by touch alone. The successes of the blind in this field have been so striking that the Soviet authorities are considering turning over the whole "Emos" electric motor plant to them.

Blind people who prefer to work at home are well catered for. Machines are set up in their homes, raw material is delivered, and finished products are collected. The women are wonderful knitters: two pairs of socks in a day is not unusual—an achievement that would be beyond the powers of most sighted persons.

This year vegetable growing was tried out for the first time. Blind gardeners planted five acres with potatoes, which have done very well.

During Tsarist times only eight blind people

in Russia received a university education. In Soviet times hundreds of blind persons have graduated from institutes of higher learning. More than 750 members of the Society for the Blind, most of whom lost their sight while on war service, are now studying in teachers' colleges, law schools and universities. They receive higher grants than sighted students. Each blind person has the services of a seeing secretary who reads aloud to him.

What do they do with their knowledge, once they have graduated? I need only mention Professor Pontrygin, one of our most famous mathematicians, who lost his sight when very young, and the well-known lawyer Tsekhladze, a familiar figure in the Moscow courts.

In Moscow factories blind persons occupy certain posts on an equal footing with sighted people. The twelve blind persons employed in the technical control department of the "Kalibr" plant give every satisfaction.

In Moscow alone there are two music schools for blind persons. In fact, there is a great wealth of musical talent among the blind, and the Society for the Blind does its utmost to develop it. Nearly 500 people who lost their sight in the war against Hitler Germany are

studying music under the society's auspices. A group of blind musicians made regular tours of the front, and are now enjoying a successful season in the Moscow clubs, performing for sighted audiences. A chorus of blind singers is a favourite Soviet radio feature.

Blind adults also take part in amateur theatricals.

Boys and girls receive a complete secondary education in the Institute for Blind Children. They attend vocational training classes while at school.

A large circulating library for the blind in Moscow is stocked with a rich variety of works in Braille, including classics and contemporary fiction.

Sightless persons who are unable to work receive maintenance allowances from the Society for the Blind. Appropriations this year under this heading exceed three million roubles.

The society is at present labouring to restore its hostels, workshops, and clubs in the liberated regions. The Germans blew up the buildings, burned the Braille libraries, destroyed equipment belonging to orchestras of blind musicians. The rehabilitation budget for this year alone totals four million roubles.

THE TRAINING OF A HOME TEACHER

* Southern Regional Association Conference

AT a Conference which was held in London on the 14th September, under the auspices of the Southern Regional Association, a large number of Home Teachers met to discuss the Training of a Home Teacher. A report of the Conference has now been issued, and copies of it can be obtained from the Secretary of the Association, 14, Howick Place, Westminster, S.W.1.

Miss Moody Stuart, Secretary of the Middlesex Association, herself once a Home Teacher, opened the debate. She said that she was sure the Home Teachers' Certificate, which was based on a comparatively small amount of study and the knowledge of a few handicrafts, was not a sufficient qualification to produce a first-class Home Teacher. Some people thought that a Social Service Diploma would be advisable, but this involved an expensive two-year course. The three main requirements for a Home Teacher were:—

1. Right personality.
2. Knowledge of teaching.
3. Knowledge of visiting.

The first being outside the scope of the Con-

ference, Miss Moody Stuart passed to the second, and pointed out that many prospective Home Teachers taking the examination had never taught anyone anything. To remedy this, would it not be possible for them to act as student-teachers for three months in blind schools? In this way they could learn how to teach Braille and handicrafts to blind people.

Turning to the third requirement, the speaker insisted that visiting was a skilled job in which most people required training. It was not enough to know the details of the Blind Persons Act and Old Age Pensions Act inside out. People needed to be shown the right way of approach—how to find out difficulties in the home and how to give advice. Further, they must learn how to present a case and its needs in such a way as to carry conviction with their Blind Welfare Committee. Such experience could best be gained by a few months' course at a Settlement, or as a student under the Charity Organisation Society. Knowledge gained at first-hand in this way was a thousand times more valuable than perfect theoretical knowledge of Acts.

The discussion that followed this stimulating speech was lively and representative, and kept, on the whole, closely to the main issues.

On the question of training in teaching, more than one speaker warmly approved the suggestion that a student should go to a blind school or club to learn from an experienced teacher the art of imparting knowledge. One Home Teacher had gained such experience at the Liverpool School for the Blind and had taken her examination from there. This speaker, touching on the second question of training in visiting, said that when she was doing child welfare work, she had accompanied a Senior Visitor for the first month, and several other Home Teachers favoured the adoption of a similar plan in their training. Others present had benefited by a short spell in the office of some blind welfare organisation.

The pros and cons of taking a Social Science or similar Diploma were keenly debated, but it was generally agreed that it would be a good thing to broaden the field of study, as this would acquaint the candidate with other social welfare services and would widen her own interests. It was felt that only by raising the standard of the Home Teachers' examination to something like that of other social service diplomas could the Home Teacher receive equal recognition with other welfare workers.

One speaker reminded his hearers that the structure of the blind world was rapidly changing—there would be fewer and fewer blind from birth—the majority would be persons blinded through disease or accident in adult life. To meet the needs of these people the aim should be to try to attract a higher type of Home Teacher into the service, and to do this more publicity was essential.

The right age to start Home Teaching was a question which provoked some to defend the bright enthusiasm of the twenties, others to praise the maturer wisdom of the thirties. On the whole, the wider experience of 30 was felt to provide the sounder starting-point for a Home Teaching career, though it was noted that war-time experiences had made many young women older than they would normally have been.

Towards the end of the Conference, a practical suggestion was made that a one-year course should be inaugurated for Home Teacher candidates, consisting of three months in the office of a blind welfare organisation, three months in a school for the blind, three months' practical experience of visiting and three months' study of examination subjects.

Miss Spenser Wilkinson, Secretary of the

Southern Regional Association, in her final summing-up, said that the suggestion of a year's course had been helpful. Her own Committee, which already provided a four months' course—two months' examination study and two months' visiting with a Home Teacher—felt the need of extending this to a year. Those who had to give up a job to take the training could be helped by maintenance grants. With regard to better publicity, all the Services had been given details of Home Teacher Training Courses, and it was understood that the Ministry of Labour would be issuing in one of their series a pamphlet on Blind Welfare as a Profession.

The thought of the Conference was finally crystallised in the following Resolution:—

"That this meeting of Home Teachers considers that the standard required for the home teaching service is much too low, and it is suggested that the Southern Regional Association for the Blind should consider the question of raising the standard of the examination for Home Teachers."

All those interested in blind welfare will hope that real progress will be made along these lines.

TWO CAMEOS

From "*Pleasant People*," by H. L. Gee
(Epworth Press)

One Thing At Least

I think he must have been one of those amiable people who are thankful for small mercies.

It was one Saturday. A Flag Day; there were collectors up and down the streets, all making an appeal for a fund for the blind.

One young lady who had "pinned" me was very strenuous in her attacks. She allowed no one to pass without making an advance towards them, rattling her tin box, and smiling so bewitchingly that only the most bearlike had the heart to pass by without putting at least a penny in the box.

I say she allowed no one to pass her, but that is not strictly true, for while I was standing near there came a poor old fellow on crutches. His body was twisted with pain; he limped along as best he could, and with an intuitive thoughtfulness which was very touching, the young lady turned slightly to glance at the traffic, making no attempt to catch his eye. Her money-box was silent.

"S'cuse me, miss," said the cripple, pulling up short. "I guess I'd like a flag."

"Oh, certainly," she said, pinning one on his torn coat, and smiling at him.

"Thanks," he said, dropping a penny in the box. "You see, miss, I've not got much money,

and I'm badly crippled up, as you can tell, but at any rate *I'm not blind.*"

He went on . . . an optimist if ever there was one.

A Pleasant Mile

I walked a pleasant mile with a very pleasant companion.

Overtaking him in a lane, I found that he knew every inch of the way and could talk delightfully about everything we passed. He noted the climbing vetch and early clover. As we passed a white gate he said, "That's the way to the hall where Sir Robert, grandfather of the present Sir Robert, used to live. I knew him. It was he who planted the beeches which give us this friendly shade. Fine trees they are,

too. You'll see they've begun cutting the corn in the field on the right, and I hear there are good prospects of a fine harvest this year—at any rate, so Joe Ellis tells me. The pond's rather low, I'm afraid. My father built the two cottages we are coming to at the corner. They were among the first he ever built, and he did so well out of them that he went on to make a fortune as a master builder. You notice how charmingly they match the setting, I hope? The dog you hear barking is Patch—Peter Watson's retriever; and there's Peter himself coming down to the garden gate. I must have a word with him."

A genial, informative man he was. *I noticed that he carried a white stick.*

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Propaganda

SIR,—As one who has had much to do in the past with blind people of both sexes, all ages and many walks of life, I should like to make a comment inspired by the excellent article on "propaganda" in your September issue. I thoroughly agree that propaganda is badly needed to teach the world at large a little more about the abilities of the blind, for there is still much ignorance in that respect. But how are we going to contend with the strong distaste felt by so many of the blind towards any kind of advertisement of themselves as blind people?

"Tritone's" mention of broadcasting reminded me of an incident that occurred many years ago when I was Lieutenant to a company of blind Rangers (senior Girl Guides). Our company had specialised in singing, at which our girls had become rather good, and we were invited to make a broadcast. Shortly before this was to take place, the Rangers asked our captain to request the person who was going to announce us to "Please not say anything about not being able to see." Their wish was granted, and we were announced simply as "The — Company of Rangers."

At the time I was glad, for I had a strong feeling of sympathy for my girls in their desire not to have their blindness made known, and was as pleased as they were that we should be accepted by the listening public as "ordinary" Rangers. But, looking back on it now, it seems to me that a wonderful chance of propaganda for the blind was missed by this respect for their over-sensitiveness. On another occasion, to my knowledge several Guide patrols refused to

take part in a public parade because they imagined (quite mistakenly) that they were going to be shown off as "the blind."

So long as such sensitiveness exists, and I'm afraid it still does exist among a large section of the blind community, it must be a great barrier in the path of any efforts at propaganda. Fortunately, there are other blind people who are less sensitive and more reasonable. With their help let us hope that something may be done successfully in the line of "Tritone's" suggestions.

While I have your attention, may I be permitted also to voice a word of praise for M.A.'s list of "Don'ts for the Sighted?" In my humble opinion it is just what is wanted, and I should like to see a copy of the list handed to every sighted person who is likely to have dealings with blind people. I only wish I had had such a list to hand to all the coxswains who gave their services when I was running the Boating Section of the Sports Club for the Blind. A noble army of volunteers, and we were eternally grateful to them, but much tactlessness might have been avoided if they had all read M.A.'s "Don'ts."

Yours, etc.,

HELEN CHALMERS.

To the Editor.

A Blind Sports Club Challenge

SIR,—The members of the Stoke-on-Trent Blind Workshops' Sports Club are anxious to fix up competitive games with neighbouring Institutions. In particular, the football team, consisting of partially sighted persons on the blind register, would like to arrange games

during the present football season. The club is also interested in skittles, cribbage, chess and draughts.

Will any Sports Clubs interested please communicate with the undersigned?

Visiting teams to Stoke-on-Trent are assured of a warm welcome.

Yours faithfully,

W. A. COOKE,

Secretary,

Stoke-on-Trent Blind Workshops'
Sports Club, Workshops for the
Blind, High Street East, Fenton,
Stoke-on-Trent.

To the Editor.

An Appeal for the Deaf-Blind.

SIR,—May I once again appeal to your readers to help the National Deaf-Blind Helpers' League to send gifts this Christmas to those of its members who are lonely or in poor circumstances?

The joy of giving is a very real joy, when one knows that one's gift has brought to others a pleasure, and belief in the goodness of human nature. We know quite confidently that such is the case with every gift and every personal message of greeting which we are enabled, through the generosity of our good friends, to send to our members at Christmastide.

Personal service is also greatly needed, such as writing to or visiting lonely members.

All donations, or offers of service, should be sent to me and will be gratefully acknowledged.

Yours, etc.,

(Mrs.) L. JOHNSON,

Hon. Gen. Secretary,

National Deaf-Blind Helpers' League.

40, Green Road, Hall Green,

Birmingham, 28.

To the Editor.

The New Beacon in Braille.

SIR,—I think the time has arrived when this publication should be put into Braille. I hold the view, amounting to more than a presentiment, that there are many blind people who are deeply interested in its contents and would welcome a Braille edition.

Over a long period of time, only a relatively small number of the articles appearing in THE NEW BEACON have been directly accessible to blind readers, and the biggest proportion of such articles was reproduced in the *Tribune*, the unavoidable suspension of which publication must have occasioned disappointment to many of us.

My feeling is that if those interested in this question would make their voices heard, little justification could exist for denying to blind people the opportunity—amounting almost to a birthright—of being able to read for themselves THE NEW BEACON in its entirety.

Yours, etc.,

H. N. VICKERSTAFF.

To the Editor.

Northern Counties Association for the Blind.

Sir,—Your readers will, I know, be interested to learn that The Northern Counties Association for the Blind will this year include on its Executive, the Lord Mayors of Bradford and Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the Mayor of Wigan. Also, on its General Council will be the Mayors of Chester and Rotherham.

The Chairman of the Association, Alderman Mrs. K. Chambers, J.P., is the first woman Lord Mayor of Bradford, and has been for many years a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind. She has occupied the Chairs of the Education and Blind Persons Acts Committees of her City and is a member of the Court and Council of the Leeds University.

Alderman J. A. Clydesdale, the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, is a very well-known totally blind man whose ability to travel throughout the Kingdom completely unattended, is frequently commented upon. Alderman Clydesdale is the Chairman of the Town Improvement and Blind Persons Acts Committees of the Newcastle City Council.

Councillor F. W. Roberts, J.P., Mayor of Wigan, has also for some time been a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute, and his interest in the problems associated with Blind Welfare has been maintained over a long period.

Councillor E. E. Ashton, Mayor of Chester, is another member of the Executive Council of the National Institute and also of the Joint Blind Welfare Committee of the County Councils Association and the Association of Municipal Corporations.

Councillor Mrs. M. H. Moorhouse, J.P., Mayor of Rotherham, has, in company with all the foregoing, been for many years a member of the General Council of the Northern Counties Association, which is proud to number among its members so many who have, from time to time, achieved the dignity of chief citizen of their towns and cities.

Yours, etc.,

J. CHALLINOR.

Secretary, Northern Counties Association
for the Blind.

THE BLIND MASSES

IT is natural that in a journal such as this the spotlights should be directed on the achievements and accomplishments of the blind. Any paper with a progressive policy rightly focusses its attention on the progressive features of its subject, on the spearhead of the attack, and the distinction, variety and number of the individual triumphs over blindness fully warrant enthusiastic and copious treatment. But in concentrating on the successes of the blind and on constructive movements for their welfare based on their abilities and achievements, we are apt to create in the mind of a reader unfamiliar personally with the problems of the blind, a far too rosy picture of general conditions. It is wise, therefore, occasionally to look upon the reverse side of the subject, to think of the thousands of lives wrecked on the hidden rocks of the dark sea, to bear in mind the frustrations, the bitternesses of lives bereft of light, and to dwell on the sheer physical wants and discomforts which blindness so often brings to the poor, the delicate, the sensitive, and the lonely. There is a tragedy of blindness and a misery of blindness and neither should be overlooked.

We have lately been fervent in our admiration of the spirited massed attack of the blind workers on industrial employment in sighted factories, but we must not let this fine achievement of hundreds of blind men and women all over the country distract our attention wholly from the fact that of the 76,000 blind people in England and Wales 64,000 are still classified as unemployable. A preponderance of these are over the age of employment, but that does not lessen the problems of their blindness; in most cases, it adds to them. Many of these problems, probably most, never come to light; there are domestic difficulties and privations which a decent pride keeps veiled, but which gnaw at the soul if allowed to abide. When we know of so many comfortable Homes for the Blind where the residents lead happy, untroubled lives, when we hear of so many new Homes opening and of so many more Homes projected, it comes as a nasty jolt to be told that there are nearly 3,000 blind people in Public Assistance Institutions—more than twice the number of those in Homes.

The most commonly acknowledged attribute of the blind is cheerfulness. We think patience is more usual in the blind than cheerfulness. In some ways, they are too patient. They are long-suffering, and put up with misunderstandings, stupidities, dillyings and dallings, patronisings and pities, in such a way that all these things go merrily on as if nothing were wrong. There are, of course, exceptions; we have met unreasonable and disagreeable blind people, blind people who are naggers, nigger-drivers, and so on. The blind are a cross-section of the population, and there are doubtless blind criminals and blind cad. But taken as a whole, the blind, in our experience, are almost unbelievably patient, and it is because of that patience that we who are concerned in their welfare often find difficulty in knowing just how to apply our good will and special knowledge. It is only by being patient ourselves that we can succeed in penetrating the barriers which patience always rears around private pains and sorrows.

How far are those directing Blind Welfare in touch with the patient masses of the blind, whose deeds are not chronicled, whose voice is never heard? The people nearest to the masses are the Home Teachers, but how often and to what extent do they bring their governing Committees into intimate contact with the blind rank and file? How many blind home workers, blind workshop employees, blind factory workers, are members of the governing bodies of institutions devoted to their welfare? What blind people represent the "unemployable" blind, or 85 per cent. of the whole blind community, on national councils and committees and on national conferences?

Associations of the blind themselves, such as the National Association of Blind Workers and the National League of the Blind, have immense tasks awaiting them now that war no longer confines their activities, and the more important of these do not, in our opinion, concern politics and economics and will not be solved by legislation. They are social problems, questions of human relationships, of the brotherhood of man—matters in which the mind must minister to the heart and not control it. A duty of societies of the blind is to bring societies for the blind into far closer contact with the inarticulate majority of the blind population, so that welfare activities may, as it were, be incessantly distributed through thousands of individual channels and be constantly re-adjusted and renewed to meet individual needs.

THE EDITOR.

MORE PICTURES OF THE MID-VICTORIAN BLIND

By W. McG. EAGAR

CONSIDERABLE interest has been expressed in the account given in the September number of *THE NEW BEACON* of Henry Mayhew's description of blind Londoners in the 1850s. No reader of *THE NEW BEACON*, however, has indicated any previous use of Mayhew's material in the literature of Blind Welfare; nor has any reader brought to light any other study of the condition of the blind in the nineteenth century. The following direct quotations show the range of Mayhew's interest in the blind and the actuality of his personal studies.

Musicians

"The street musicians are of two kinds, the skilful and the blind. The former obtain their money by the agreeableness of their performance, and the latter in pity for their affliction rather than admiration of their harmony. The blind street musicians, it must be confessed, belong generally to the rudest class of performers. Music is not used by them as a means of pleasing, but rather as a mode of soliciting attention. Such individuals are known in the 'profession' by the name of 'pensioners'; they have their regular rounds to make, and particular houses at which to call on certain days of the week, and from which they generally obtain a 'small trifle.' They form, however, a most peculiar class of individuals. They are mostly well-known characters, and many of them have been performing in the streets of London for many years. They are also remarkable for the religious cast of their thoughts, and the comparative refinement of their tastes and feelings."

A long interview with "Old Sarah," an aged hurdy-gurdy player, follows the above. She had been about the streets of London for 40 years, had had during that period four guides, and worn out three instruments. Her cheerfulness, her love of truth, and the extreme simplicity of her nature, were almost childlike. "Like the generality of blind people, she had a deep sense of religion, and her charity for a woman in her station of life was something marvellous; for, though living on alms, she herself had, I was told, two or three little pensioners. When questioned on this subject, she laughed the matter off as a jest, though I was assured of the truth of the fact. Her attention to her guide was most marked. If a cup of tea was given to her after her day's rounds, she would

be sure to turn to the poor creature who led her about, and ask, 'You comfortable, Liza?' or 'Is your tea to your liking, Liza?'"

In telling the story of her life, Old Sarah said that her father was a hatter, and that when she was but a day old the nurse took her out of the warm bed and carried her to the window, and the cold caused an inflammation of the eyes from which she rapidly went blind. She stayed at home with her mother until the age of 13 when, as she said, "I was put to the Blind-school, but I only kept there nine months; they turned me out because I was not clever with my hands, and I could not learn to spin or make sash-lines; my hands was ocker'd like. I had not been used at home to do anything for myself—not even to dress myself." When her parents died she went to the Union and "the parish paid for my learning the 'cymbal'—cymbal, if you please—the hurdy-gurdy ain't its right name."

The other personal stories are of a "Farm-Yard Player," a Blind Performer on the Bells, a Blind Female Violin Player, a Blind Scotch Violoncello Player, a Blind Irish Piper and a Scotch Piper.

Institutions

"If they appear in the public streets selling or soliciting alms, the blind are exempted from becoming recipients of the benefits of many of the charitable institutions . . . 'If anything was to drive me to the parish, I should lose all hopes of getting some help from the blind institutions; and so I dread the workhouse worse than all . . . If I could only get some friend to give me a letter of recommendation to Mr. Day's Charity for the Blind, I should be happy for the rest of my days.'"

Writing and Reading

The blind man who read in public the Gospels in Mr. Freer's system told Mayhew that he learned to read by this system in four lessons. "In Mr. Freer's system the regular alphabet letters are not used, but there are raised characters, 34 in number, including long and short vowels; and these characters express sounds, and a sound may comprise a short syllable." When he began he took from 2s. 6d. to 2s. 9d. a day and one day 3s., but then his receipts fell and lately, he said, he had not averaged more than 2s. 6d. a week by his street reading and writing. The working people were "his best friends, most decidedly." He tired

of the streets; besides being half-starved. There were only five or six blind men about London who read in the streets. We can read nothing but the Scriptures, as 'blind printing'—so it's sometimes called—has only been used in the Scriptures. I write also in the streets, as well as read. I use Wedgwood's manifold writer. I write verses from Scripture. There was no teaching necessary for this. I trace the letters from my knowledge of them when I could see. I believe I am the only blind man who writes in the streets."

Another blind man, who gave rather painful details to illustrate his complete darkness, scorned the suggestion that he or his friends could distinguish colours by touch, adding that "there's blind people in the school who can tell the colours of their rods; but they do so by putting their tongues to them, and so they can distinguish them that's been dipped in coppers from them that hasn't. I know blind people can take a clock to pieces and put it together again as well as any person that can see. Blind people gets angry when they hear people talk of persons seeing with their fingers. A man has told me that a blind person in St. James's workhouse could read the newspaper with his fingers, but that, the blind know, is quite impossible."

Dogs.

References to marriage, relationship with the police, and forms of relief are numerous, too many to be effectively quoted within the scope of this article. There are several stories of dog companions. "Nobody likes a dog so much as a blind man, I am told," says Mayhew, and gives sundry testimonials. Some liked bulldogs for fancy if they could get them, others found help from the proverbially intelligent mongrels. One bold street trader said that his mongrel had been with him for nine years. "He is with me night and day, goes to church with me and all . . . My dog knows every word I say to him. Tell him to turn right or left, or cross over, and whip! round he goes in a moment. Where I go for my tobacco, at the shop in Piccadilly, close to the Arcade—it's down six or seven steps, straight down—and when I tells Keeper to go to the baccy shop, off he is and drags me down the steps, with the people after me, thinking he's going to break my neck down the place, and the people stands on top the steps making all kinds of remarks while I'm below. If he was to lose me to-night or to-morrow, he'd come back here and rise the whole neighbourhood. He knows any public-house, no matter whether he was there before

or not; just whisper to him, go to the public-house, and away he scampers and drags me right into the first he comes to." Keeper's predecessor, Blucher, had a tail like a wolf, ears like a fox, and a face black like a monkey. Poor old Blucher went blind also, and when his master went out without him used to fret so badly that he took him along with Keeper, but he got run over one night in Piccadilly when, owing to the noise of traffic, he could not hear the knock of his master's stick.

Dreams.

On dreams Mayhew writes at length—of the tailor whose eyes failed at the age of 30, and who often dreamt of colours and of the fields "with the cows grazing on a beautiful green pasture, and the flowers, just at twilight like, closing up their blossoms as they do"; of the blind musician with highly trained hearing, who dreamt of hearing and touching and of strange adventures; of his father but never of his mother, though his father had not been of much use to him.

Mayhew quoted Sanderson's conception of seeing as being similar to that of a series of threads drawn from the distant object to the eye, and the blind man to whom he was talking was tremendously interested in it, and went on to discuss the impossibility of one who had never seen understanding two-dimensional images.

Obstacle Sense.

One of the most interesting stories of the whole series relates to the obstacle sense, which we are still discussing and perhaps not working at sufficiently. A blind man who kept a lodging-house in Manchester and had a wife fond of drink, made a little chest of drawers in which he put his money, so constructed that she could not get at it without breaking the drawers all to pieces. He also made a little house of the most realistic kind for his pet blind mice. He was the man who said that he could hear the lamp-posts in the streets or any solid thing if it were as high as his ear. He tells a story, too long to quote in full, that one night going home between 12 and 1 o'clock he heard a gentleman following him and then a sergeant of police, to whom he said "Good night, policeman," knowing his footsteps. The gentleman asked the policeman whether that man was really blind and then demanded: "How is it that you go so cleverly along the street if you're blind?" Then followed a test in which the gentleman—"he was a real gentleman—the sergeant said so," and the blind man knew he wasn't a poor man by his walk—tried sundry tricks, the

policeman acting as umpire. The inquisitor went some distance off and Mayhew's blind friend walked up the street, striking every lamp-post as he came to it, and eventually stopping to indicate that he had reached the gentleman, who drew back when about to be touched, but eventually after several tests admitted that he was beat, gave a reward and promised to spend an hour some night with him again.

There is something else to be said of Henry Mayhew beyond that he had an unequalled gift for depicting real people in a convincing way. He had extraordinary sympathy. In describing the blind of his day, he does not overdo the pathos, which would have been only too easy. He presented the blind of his time to the public as a class of people stricken by a misfortune which was too little comprehended, but displaying qualities of courage, cheerfulness and goodness which entitled them to the deep respect of their fellow men and women.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Royal Normal College Successes.—The Royal Normal College for the Blind announces the following recent successes of its pupils (G.S. denotes Gardner Scholar):—

SILVER AND BRONZE MEDALS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS

Norman Green (G.S.) has been awarded a Silver Medal for Stage III (Advanced) Typewriting and a Bronze Medal for Shorthand at 120 words per minute.

Audrey Frood (G.S.) has been awarded a Bronze Medal for Stage II (Intermediate) Typewriting.

ASSOCIATESHIP OF THE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

Robert Eves, Leslie Pye (G.S.).

ASSOCIATED BOARD OF THE

ROYAL SCHOOLS OF MUSIC, LONDON

Preliminary—Piano .. Malcolm Turner.

Grade III—Piano .. Mary Dopson.

Grade I V—Piano .. Gordon Stephens.

Grade V—Piano .. Peter Price.

Grade VII—Piano .. Irvine Swift, Edward Wil-

Grade I V—Singing .. Dorothy Rooke (G.S.).—
Credit.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS

Shorthand—100 words per minute.

Basil Frost (G.S.), Peter Nason (G.S.).

120 words per minute.

Colin Wells (G.S.).

Typewriting—Stage I.

Daphne Beckett, Betty Charlesworth, Norman Coggeshall, Barbara Corder, Josephine Downer, Rhoda Frost (G.S.), Ernest Green, Desmond Hodges, Gerald Neal (G.S.), Frederick Potter,

Margaret Ramsay, Ethel Sherman, Jean Watts, Doris Whittam (all Credits); and Muriel Young.

Typewriting—Stage II.

Dorothy Jones (G.S.), Arthur Roach (G.S.), Dorothy Rooke (G.S.), Joan Taylor (G.S.), and Eunice Woodget (G.S.) (all First Class).

Typewriting—Stage III.

Mary Lathbury (G.S.), Peter Nason (G.S.) (both Second Class).

Shorthand—Typist's Certificate.

Audrey Frood (G.S.), Evelyn Hardiman, Mary Lathbury (G.S.), Colin Wells (G.S.).

English—Stage II.

Dorothy Rooke (G.S.) (Second Class), Eunice Woodget (G.S.) (First Class)

Esperanto—Stage I.

Ernest Green, Eunice Woodget (G.S.).

LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Shorthand—120 words per minute.

Evelyn Hardiman, Colin Wells (G.S.) (both Distinction).

COLLEGE OF TEACHERS OF THE BLIND

Piano-forte Tuning Diploma.

Ernest Edwards (Honours), Robert Meek, Arnold Mytton (G.S.).

Tribute to Blind Worker's Twenty-Five Years' Service.—Blind people from all over Fife attended a gathering in St. Brycedale Church Hall, Kirkcaldy, last month, to celebrate the semi-jubilee of the appointment of Mr. William Edgar as Senior Welfare Officer of the Fife Society for Teaching the Blind. Sir Michael Nairn, Bart., opening the meeting with words of appreciation of the chief guest, handed over the chair to Mr. James T. Davidson.

In his remarks, Mr. Davidson said Mr. Edgar had been instrumental in furthering the cause of the Blind generally, and in particular in the county of Fife. Twelve years after his appointment he became totally blind, but continued by his wisdom and enthusiasm to be of great service to the Society. In 1937 he invented square handwriting on a frame, a very useful device.

Mr. Davidson concluded with these words: "During the war Mr. Edgar has done splendid service in obtaining work for a number of employable blind, a number of whom will retain their places in industry. Nearly all the improvements to which I have referred were initiated or largely promoted by our good friend, whose qualities of head and heart they amply demonstrate."

The presentation took the form of a wallet of notes.

Wartime Work of Stoke's Blind.—The blind people of Stoke-on-Trent do not claim to have done anything out of the ordinary during the war, but a picture of what they did do gives some idea of how the blind community generally participated in the national effort. At a victory celebration tea and entertainment for the Blind of Stoke last month, the Lord Mayor, Alderman

W. H. Kemp, said that during the war the city's blind had made 1,022 airborne panniers, 35,000 parachute cords, 28,000 brushes, 3,000 mats, 1,000 pairs of surgical stockings, 3,960 mattresses and hundreds of laundry baskets, jar baskets, camouflage nets, &c. Volunteer blind knitters had completed and sent more than a thousand garments to the Red Cross centres, etc.; the Sports Club had helped the Prisoners of War Funds and the Red Cross; the Blind people themselves had raised £171 for the Spitfire Fund, and supported National Savings; and a number of blind people went to work in Royal Ordnance factories.

Blind Actors.—The Rosemary Club for the Blind, formed at Tonbridge since the war, last month gave an excellent performance of a play entitled "Margaret's Wild Oats," written by Mr. Thomas Halton, one of the actors, at Bidborough, in aid of the Kent and Sussex Hospital. The company also presented musical items and another short play. The Blind players showed considerable ability and seemed to enjoy the show as much as the audience did, and rarely has an amateur production of this kind been more highly appreciated.

PERSONALIA

LORD HOTHAM has been elected President of the Hull and East Riding Institute for the Blind in succession to the late Sir Philip B. Reckitt, Bart.

* * *

The Mayor of Bury (Coun. T. Toon) has congratulated Mr. ERNEST JONES, Bury's blind "newsboy," who has completed 50 years at his stand, in Bolton Street. "Your courage and cheery spirit have many times proved an inspiration and help to others," said the Mayor.

* * *

PROFESSOR W. J. B. RIDDELL, of the Chair of Ophthalmology at Glasgow University, has been elected chairman of the Mission to the Outdoor Blind for Glasgow and the West of Scotland. He fills the place of the late Mr. Claud A. Allan.

* * *

At last month's meeting of the Royal Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Incorporated Institution for the Blind, the impending retirement of Mr. ALFRED E. CHEEK was announced. Mr. Cheek has been Manager and Secretary for 39 years, during which period the activities of the institution have grown beyond recognition.

* * *

The REV. GREVILLE COLIN POPE, the blind vicar of Cornworthy, near Totnes, has resigned after 34 years in that benefice. He lost his sight at

the age of 12, but took his B.A. and M.A. degrees at Exeter College, Oxford, in 1899 and 1903.

* * *

Last month the members of the Carlisle Branch of the National League of the Blind presented Mr. EDGAR GRIERSON, M.P., with a pigskin despatch case, suitably engraved, as a mark of their appreciation of his work to improve the lot of the blind. Mr. Grierson has been connected with the welfare of the city blind for some 16 years.

* * *

Last month a ceremony took place at Rhyl to mark the retirement of Mr. S. E. STEVENS, Superintendent of the Liverpool Schools for the Blind, evacuated to Rhyl at the outbreak of the war. The meeting was presided over by Mr. C. V. H. Egerton Jones, M.A., Headmaster of the Wavertree School, who paid striking tribute to the outstanding services of Mr. Stevens, who had "fathered" the Liverpool Schools for over 32 years and raised them to a standard foremost among the blind schools of the country. A handsome wallet of treasury notes with a bound list of 200 individual subscribers was presented to Mr. Stevens, who, in thanking all concerned for their generous gift, said that he was by no means saying goodbye to the world of the blind and would continue his honorary services wherever he felt they could be of advantage to the blind.

* * *

MR. J. C. COLLIGAN, Secretary of the National Institute's Liverpool and Merseyside Branch, has been appointed an Assistant Secretary at the National Institute for the Blind Headquarters. COL. T. L. FRANKLAND has been appointed Branch Secretary, Liverpool. Both appointments date from 1st November, and are subject to confirmation in due course.

* * *

MR. EDWARD EVANS, M.P., being no longer able to carry out his former duties as Deputy Secretary of the National Institute for the Blind, has been appointed visitor to Homes and Schools under the management of the National Institute for the Blind, and will continue to assist the Institute, as arranged, in other capacities.

* * *

MISS M. OGILVY has been appointed Information Officer and Assistant Editor of the National Institute for the Blind, in place of MISS MARY THOMAS, who retired at the end of August.

The Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind writes: "To us at the National Institute for the Blind, the only good

thing about Miss Thomas's retirement is that she will still be available when required to do special jobs of work in Blind Welfare. She has richly earned retirement and, if her going leaves us a little desolate, we none the less cordially wish her health and happiness for many years of cultured ease. Miss Thomas came to us in 1930 from the Metropolitan Association, where she had been Supervisor of Home Teachers. Before that, she had had admirable academic grounding for social work with a degree from Newnham and a Social Science Diploma in London, taken while living at the Women's University Settlement in Southwark. She became Secretary of the C.O.S., and after that entered on Blind Welfare by becoming Secretary of the Aftercare Association for Deaf, Blind and Crippled Children. In the last 15 years Miss Thomas's wide knowledge and deep interest in every aspect of blind welfare, have been made evident in all our publications. She wrote "The First Seventy Years," and, being appointed to the Secretaryship of the Joint Committee on the Education of the Blind, was largely responsible for the production of its Report. Mr. Wagg's Chronological Survey of Blind Welfare also owed much to her collaboration. Her successors in office will be advantaged by her reorganisation of the Institute's Library. In Miss Thomas we lose a diligent and scholarly colleague, whom we have valued not only for her ability and wisdom, but for her wit and unflinching kindness."

REVIEWS of REPORTS

Home

Royal Normal College.—The 1944-45 Report gives a picture of a busy and lively community, active in work and play. Twenty-one pupils completed their training during the year and, with very few exceptions, found suitable employment. Blind typists have had the chance of proving their worth in the war years and are much more easily placed than formerly. Past and present students took part in the "Back to Work" Exhibitions held by the Ministry of Labour and National Service in Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Newcastle, and samples of their work were also shown in the N.I.B.'s contribution to the original London Exhibition. One of the tests of a good school is the nature and extent of its outside school activities.

These are numerous at Rowton Castle. Literary and debating societies, concerts, dances and play readings are all mentioned. Shrewsbury Scouts joined the College Troop in a camp in the Castle Park, and the College Annual Sports Day was as popular as ever. The Music and Tuning Departments have been steadily and successfully continuing their work. There is only one shadow in the picture—the death of the Chairman, Sir Edward Campbell, who for more than 20 years had given devoted service to the College.

Royal School of Industry for the Blind, Bristol.—The great event of the year 1944-45 was the opening of the Home for aged blind at 127, Pembroke Road, in October. By the end of March this year the Home was full and 17 happy residents were enjoying the comfort and security provided. The target sum of £20,000 had nearly been reached—the Fund stood at £19,389 on the 31st March, an achievement of which the Committee may justly feel proud. School results have been good, and out-of-school activities included the giving of concerts to U.S.A. hospitals in the vicinity. Home teachers have been busy, with well over 7,000 visits to their credit and the two occupational handicraft centres and social centres have flourished. The Gardeners' Guild is proving a "growing" attraction, and the Annual Show this year brought entries from far and wide in the Western Counties.

Foreign

Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind.—In the 113th Report for 1944-45 of this Institution, evidence is given that in spite of its venerable age, there is nothing hide-bound in the work done; new ventures are constantly being made, and every page of the Report is vital and interesting. Placement occupies an important part in the year's story, and a Placement Office was set up for the special preparation of those who hoped to enter the world of sighted labour. Twenty-nine pupils enrolled in a course at an industrial shop where modern machinery had been installed. A small sight-saving class was another venture of the year which made promising progress. The Institution has for more than twenty years had its own Home Teachers Training Course for blind students preparing to be Home Teachers, and two types of course are provided—of a year and two years respectively. The compulsory subjects include household activities for women students and household mechanics for men, and the trainees also attend lectures at the Extension Department of the School of Social Work of the University of Pennsylvania.

A WOODLAND STORY

By PEGGY VERNALL (who is blind)

SOMEbody came to the forest
In a dress of the purest green.
"Awake," she called to the blackbird,
"And sing of what youth can mean!"
So the blackbird trilled to the morning,
And the thrush took up the refrain;
And the chaffinch sang till the woodland rang,
For Spring had come home again.

Somebody came to the forest
In a robe of the sun's warm beams.
"Ah, rest," she said, "in the noon-day;
Lo, now is the time for dreams."
So the birds were hushed in the branches,
And the brook flowed drowsily on,
And Summer came with her crown of flame,
For Spring, the beloved, had gone.

Somebody came to the forest
In a crimson and golden gown.
The leaves grew sad at her coming,
And faintly came fluttering down.
Then the squirrel gathered his acorns,
And the birds deserted their homes,
And Autumn's breeze told the sighing trees:
"I go, for the Winter comes."

Somebody came to the forest
In a bleak and despairing grey.
She madly shattered the branches,
And howled on her ruthless way.
Then the tree-trunks shuddered in anguish.
They feared in the day so chill;
But in the night fell a covering white,
And Winter grew pale and still.

Somebody lives in the forest—
Old Time with the gentle eyes.
He knows when the may-tree blossoms,
And cares when a fledgling dies.
He colours the hues of sunset,
And murmurs among the trees.
He paints the glows of the budding rose,
And sings on the evening breeze.

O, when you enter the forest,
Beware as you walk his glades,
For there by chance you may find him
At dusk when the twilight fades.
Move silently through the forest,
And watch for his footprints fair;
For only he who desires to see
Can know that Old Time is there.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

BRAILLE MUSIC.

The prices of the following pieces of music are net and represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production.

Dances:			s. d.
19307	Bernard, F. I'd rather be me, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>		o 6
19308	Evans, R., and Mann, D. There I've said it again, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>		o 6
19310	Gallop, Saxon and Cook. There must be a way, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>		o 6
19309	Lecuona, E. Night after night, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i>		o 6

BRAILLE BOOKS.

Blind Institutions and blind individuals in the British Empire are allowed two-thirds discount on the prices given. All books are in Standard English Braille, large size, interpointed and paper covers.

Literary Criticism:

18283-5 Ex Libris: Confessions of a Constant Reader, by E. E. Kellet. 3 vols. 6s. 3d. per vol. F183.

It is on the bookshelves of home, school, college, that the action of this autobiography of a scholar and critic of extraordinary range and ripeness of scholarship takes place. The book will appeal to all book lovers.

Poetry:

18699-18701 A Choice of Kipling's Verse, made by T. S. Eliot. 3 vols. 7s. per vol. F210.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLIND WORKERS.

All communications to the National Association of Blind Workers should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Miss D. W. Archer, 33, Argyle Road, Reading, Berks.

BLIND LADY requires **FURNISHED ROOM** in comfortable home, if possible near bus routes to Baker Street. Write Miss Ivy Dunn, 77, Broomsleigh Street, Mill Lane, West Hampstead, N.W.6.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All Home Teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 32, Whiteholme Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, 21.

HOME TEACHERS' EXAMINATION, 1946. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

THE ROYAL NORMAL COLLEGE AND ACADEMY OF MUSIC FOR THE BLIND invites applications from suitably qualified men for appointment, January, 1946, as Teacher of Organ, Piano and Theory of Music. Full time teaching duties include training of mixed choir and preparation for diplomas of R.C.O., R.C.M. and R.A.M. Salary, in accordance with Burnham Scale. Full particulars and testimonials to Principal, Rowton Castle, Nr. Shrewsbury.

WANTED. Dubied, Harrison or Foster Flat Machine on metal stand; 7 needles per inch; not less than 32-inch needle bed, racking over 3 needles. Must be certified in first-class working order. State price and cost of packing and delivery on board ship. Replies to be addressed to the Principal, The Athlone School for the Blind, Kassel's Vlei Road, Bellville, C.P., South Africa.

BASKET MAKER. Foreman required for permanent position; must be competent to supervise and organise department producing variety of baskets; capable of instructing apprentices; preference to man with all-round knowledge of the trade; knowledge of furniture work useful. Salary £5. 15s. per week, plus war bonus, at present £1. 3s.; 40 hour week; Superannuation Scheme in operation. Write, stating age, qualifications and experience. Royal Institution for the Blind, 12, Borough Road, Sunderland.

THE COVENTRY SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND invites applications for the post of a **female Home Teacher and Visitor**—sighted and certificated. Salary according to experience.

Applications, with testimonials, and stating age and experience, to be addressed to Mrs. R. E. Staner, 7, St. Patrick's Road, Coventry.

HOME TEACHER required by the Manchester and Salford Blind Aid Society, 30, Tonman St., Manchester 3. The successful candidate will be required to undergo a medical examination as to the physical fitness for the work. Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, to be forwarded to the Secretary.

MIDDLESEX ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of **Home Teacher** in the County of Middlesex. Salary (if certificated) £200 per annum, plus bonus rising to £275 per annum, plus bonus.

Apply stating age, experience and qualifications to the Secretary, Middlesex Association for the Blind, 66, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Joint Committee for the Welfare of the Blind.

Applications are invited for the post of **Home Teacher of the Blind**. The salary scale for fully-qualified Home Teachers is £180-£10-£250 per annum, plus bonus. The post will be superannuable. Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, Blind Welfare Committee, County Education Offices, Stafford.

WARRINGTON, WIDNES AND DISTRICT SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the position of **Sighted Supervisor** in the Knitting Department (nine employees). Good salary and permanent post with excellent prospects.

Applications to be sent to the Secretary, Warrington, Widnes and District Society for the Blind, 4, Museum Street, Warrington.

Applications are invited for the following contemplated Residential Appointments in the New Home for Aged Blind Persons to be opened shortly in Southampton.

(a) **MATRON OR WARDEN IN CHARGE.** Preferably experienced in Blind Welfare or care of aged persons; with some nursing experience. Minimum salary: £150 per annum, plus residential emoluments.

(b) **ASSISTANT MATRON OR WARDEN.** Minimum salary: £100 per annum, plus residential emoluments.

Subject to medical examination, successful applicant will be included in the Local Superannuation Scheme.

Particulars of previous experience and age, together with two copies of recent testimonials should be sent to the Secretary, Southampton Association for the Welfare of the Blind, 43, The Avenue, Southampton, not later than November 30th.

November 15th, 1945

The New
BEACON

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

APPOINTMENT OF HOME TEACHER OF THE BLIND

Applications are invited for the position of **Sighted Female Home Teacher of the Blind**, for duty in the Administrative county Area adjacent to Bolton. **Previous experience in Blind Welfare an advantage but not essential.** Salary according to experience and qualifications, rising to a maximum of £208 per annum, plus war bonus, at present £48 per annum, plus travelling expenses. The position will be superannuable.

Applications in applicant's own handwriting, accompanied by copies of not more than two recent testimonials, stating age, experience and qualifications, must be received by the **County Medical Officer of Health, County Offices, Preston**, not later than Friday, 30th November, 1945.

R. H. ADCOCK,
County Offices, Preston. Clerk of the County Council.

WEST SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL.

Appointment of Assistant Home Teacher for the Blind.

Applications are invited for the above whole-time appointment (women), the duties of which will be to visit the blind in the County in their own homes, to teach them as far as possible to read Braille or Moon Type, to instruct them in simple pastime occupations, and generally to assist in promoting the social welfare of the blind. Preference will be given to applicants holding the Certificate of Home Teaching of the College of Teachers of the Blind. Salary, if qualified, £195 per annum, rising to £230 per annum, plus cost-of-living bonus and travelling allowance according to County Scale for the time being. Particulars of appointment and forms of application may be obtained from the undersigned, by whom applications, accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, should be received as soon as possible. Canvassing in any form, direct or indirect, will disqualify.

L. G. H. MUNSEY,
Clerk of the County Council.

Shire Hall,
Bury St. Edmunds.
26th October, 1945.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF OLDHAM AND

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Appointment of Home Teacher of the Blind.

Applications are invited for the position of **Sighted Female Home Teacher of the Blind** for duty in the County Borough and adjacent Administrative County Area. Applicants must have passed the Home Teachers examination and experience in blind welfare is desirable. Salary according to experience and qualifications, £156 rising to a maximum of £208 per annum plus war bonus, at present £48 per annum, plus travelling expenses.

The appointment is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Canvassing or the submission of testimonials from any member of the two councils or of any Committee appointed by the councils will be a disqualification.

Applications stating age, qualifications and experience, accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, should be forwarded to the undersigned immediately.

MAURICE HARRISON,
Director of Education.

Education Offices, Oldham.
6th November, 1945.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF ROCHDALE.

Applications are invited from sighted females for the position of Home Teacher and Visitor of the Blind at a salary of £195 per annum plus bonus.

Applicants must hold the Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind and should have had experience of blind welfare work.

Applications should be addressed to the Director of Education, and should be delivered at the Education Office, Townhead, Rochdale, not later than November 30th, 1945.

G. F. SIMMONDS,
Town Clerk.

Town Hall,
Rochdale.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF HUDDERSFIELD APPOINTMENT OF HOME VISITOR AND TEACHER OF THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the position of **Certified Sighted Female Home Visitor and Teacher of the Blind**. Salary £200—£250 per annum, according to experience, rising from the salary fixed by annual increments of £10 to £250 per annum, plus cost of living bonus, at present £48 2s. od. per annum.

The appointment is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination and to reside within the County Borough. Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, together with copies of not more than two recent testimonials and endorsed "Home Visitor" should be sent to the undersigned not later than the 1st day of December, 1945.

HARRY BANN,
Town Clerk.

Town Hall, Huddersfield.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL. Home Teachers of the Blind.

Applications are invited from sighted persons, holding the Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind, for the posts of female Home Teachers of the Blind, at a salary within the scale £200, rising by annual increments of £12. 10s. to £250 a year, plus a war addition at the rate of 18s. 6d. a week, and an allowance for subsistence of £12 a year. The commencing salary will be fixed according to qualifications and experience.

Applications will also be considered from persons who have not yet obtained the certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind, but, in this case, the commencing salary will be at a rate less than £200 a year. The commencing salary will be fixed having regard to the applicant's experience.

The appointment will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Candidates should preferably be able to provide and maintain a car, for which an allowance on the County Scale will be paid.

Applications in candidates' own handwriting, stating age, qualifications and experience, with copies of two recent testimonials, should be sent not later than the 30th November, 1945, to the Executive Officer, Blind Welfare Service, County Hall, Maidstone, from whom any further particulars required may be obtained.

W. L. PLATTS,
Clerk of the County Council.
County Hall, Maidstone.
October, 1945.

The New BEACON

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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EMPHASIS ON SERVICE

By a Member of the Home Teaching Service.

THE coming changes in administration of Blind Welfare Services are causing many of us furiously to think and some of us to view the future with a certain uneasiness. Briefly, we are wondering whether the Government, the local authorities and the general public will realise that the blind community does not live by bread alone and that, however generous the pension paid them in the future may be, there will still remain a vast amount of welfare work—in its widest and truest sense—to be done among the unemployable blind.

Voluntary Societies have for so long acted as agents for the local authorities in the matter of Domiciliary Assistance that the foreshadowed removal of that duty causes some perturbation. How well I remember the perturbation occasioned when we were first faced with the duties of investigation and were turned into a species of relieving officer overnight.

Those new responsibilities we undertook willingly, because we were thankful for our blind folk to be free of the stigma of Poor Relief; but what heart burnings many of us have endured as the result of carrying out these duties. It requires some moral courage to inform the eager, confiding teller of good fortune that in consequence of the improved financial position Domiciliary Assistance will have to be reduced immediately. But that is by the way.

We look, then, to a future in which our time will not have to be taken up with ascertaining exactly what Mrs. Smith's husband earns and how much profit Mrs. Jones is making out of her lodgers, or in hurling ourselves about the countryside in order that we may complete the periodical review of all grant cases by a certain date. The Home Teaching Service may in future hope to devote its whole time and energies to the service—with a capital S—of the blind and their many and varied problems.

We will admit quite frankly that only part of our time will be taken up with actual teaching of embossed types and handicrafts, the organisation of socials and classes, the discovery of blind persons and the provision of wireless sets, etc. If beyond these duties we had nothing else to do, we should indeed be unprofitable servants. There are innumerable ways in which we are needed, and needed urgently, if the welfare—my dictionary defines this as "health, happiness, prosperity"—of our blind people is to be adequately catered for.

Take health first. How many blind people there are to whom a walk is a treat that does not often come their way and who would benefit in mind and body from such exercise, but have no one free to take them? While there is a Home Teaching Service no man or woman in the future should be confined to a house or room day after day because he lacks an escort.

Personal cleanliness is a delicate subject but one which we dare not ignore. Many blind persons have no facilities for bathing at home, and would be only too glad to be taken regularly to the public baths.

Again, one can imagine few more distressing conditions than for a clean person who cannot see to be troubled with fleas and bugs, but this does occasionally happen. The extermination of vermin is not a pleasant occupation, but if there is no one else able or willing to do it the Home Teacher is the person to whom the blind person should be able to turn. It has been suggested to me that this is not part of our work to which I replied that anything which needs to be done is part of our work if there is no one else whose duty it is to do it.

Visits to the doctor and to hospital for treatment are often difficult for those living alone to arrange, but the blind person should be assured of an escort while there is a Home Teacher to call on. In the past many of us have been compelled to refuse, since the time could not possibly be spared, but that should not be so in the future.

And now happiness; not so easy to define. Mrs. A is cheered and comforted for days if she can be taken to the cemetery to put a few flowers on her husband's grave. Mrs. B would feel she was in the thick of things again if she could be taken to Woolworth's and have everything described to her. Mrs. C would be made supremely happy if you read her some well-loved poems and Mr. D would feel it was like old times to hear some of the brighter items from the "News of the World." The aim is to help those on whom blindness imposes serious limitations to make contact with life—at new points if possible—but above all to prevent them from feeling cut off from people and interests which have made up their life hitherto. Visiting can be an adventure of the spirit if tackled with imagination and insight.

Of course the folk to whom we are most necessary are those who live alone. They depend on us, in many cases, for reading and writing letters, mending and in a 100 ordinary and extraordinary ways. The provision of Homes will not entirely solve their problems, for there are some known to us all to whom privacy and freedom are as dear as life itself and to whom the prospect of living with a crowd of other folk,

and bereft of their cherished bits of furniture, is a way of life not to be endured until old age and feebleness make it compulsory.

Those in families often need us, too, and for a variety of reasons. Some because they are in danger of being killed by kindness, and others because the very fact that they have a visitor to whom they can tell their troubles will restrain selfish relatives from snatching all their clothing coupons and leaving them for hours without warmth and food.

Those in lodgings are usually glad to have us behind them, especially when rent books are apt not to be made up to date by the landlady, and it is surprising what improvements in the changing of bed-linen, etc., take place when the Home Teacher is known to call regularly.

The deaf-blind need us in a very special way. They and those with whom they live are frequently in a state of acute nervous tension which is not surprising but which can have serious results. The visit of the Home Teacher every week for one or two hours, if possible, should ease the situation. She can perhaps take the afflicted one right out of the strained atmosphere for a walk, or try and interest him in the news, or simply listen patiently to his complaints. Even to offer oneself as a safety valve for both parties is a help, and all that can be done sometimes.

At this point I would say how mistaken it is to suppose that people of independent means do not need our services.

Loneliness, misunderstanding, fears and frustrations are the experience of folk in large houses as well as small, and the need for understanding, encouragement and friendship is often as great.

Happy are those of us who work under the direction of a secretary who has vision and does not assess our work solely by the number of ticks in the Register, but who will in future be content with a somewhat smaller number of visits to record in the annual report provided that she is satisfied that those visits were of real value. By this I do not mean to suggest that regular visitation is not necessary and desirable—it gives comfort and a sense of security to some living alone to know on what day they may count on having their Home Teacher; but if a certain number of visits per day is strictly adhered to, then there must be occasions when services which should be rendered are left undone because of the time involved, which is reminiscent of the boy who washed till he came to the dirt.

It is a salutary practice to review one's work at the end of the day and to ask oneself of what practical value one's visits have been. What

contribution have they made to the health and happiness, the mental and spiritual alertness of those with whom one has made contact?

The aim of Blind Welfare is not to provide a means of existence, but to see that, so far as in

us lies, our blind friends shall have *life* and have it abundantly. How far is that view held by Authority? Time will tell. May we never have cause to write "Ichabod" across the chapters that are about to be written.

HOME NEWS

A Royal Visitor.—The Duchess of Kent visited last month the Royal School for the Blind Workshops at 260, Waterloo Road, London.

The Blind and National Insurance.—On 7th December, the Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, M.P., Minister of National Insurance, received a deputation, led by Mr. Edward Evans, M.P., and consisting of Mr. Fred Messer, M.P., the Hon. L. W. Joynson-Hicks, M.P., and Sir Ian Fraser, M.P., to make representations on behalf of the blind in the forthcoming legislation on National Insurance.

The deputation was sympathetically received, and the Minister promised to consider the recommendations put forward.

Wireless for the Blind and Purchase Tax.—In committee on the Finance Bill in the House of Commons on 27th November, Mr. Turton (Thirsk and Malton—Con.) moved to free from Purchase Tax the wireless sets that were purchased by the British Wireless for the Blind Fund for free allocation to registered blind persons throughout the country. With Purchase Tax at 33½ per cent. it meant that the State took £26,000 out of what had been subscribed for the purpose of giving blind persons wireless sets.

Sir Ian Fraser (Lonsdale—Con.) said there was a strong ground in equity why they should do something for the blind taxpayer and the citizen. He was robbed by circumstances of enjoyment of many of the things he paid for as a taxpayer.

Mr. Edward Evans (Lowestoft—Lab.) said wireless to the blind was an educative, a recreative and also a social factor. It brought them into touch with a world from which they were cut off.

Other members supported the amendment.

Mr. Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, while sympathetic, said that if he made a concession here he would be going against principles to which importance was attached by his predecessors. Nevertheless he was prepared to see, if the amendment was withdrawn, that words were put down on the report stage which would seek to give effect to what had been asked for

in different parts of the House. There was a technical point about this, and he would try to draft an amendment that would ensure that it applied to blind persons only. This must be treated as a completely exceptional case.

The amendment was then withdrawn.

The promised concession will be of great benefit to the blind. It will enable the Wireless Fund to increase the value of its service by 33½ %, that is, to purchase and place with the same sum of money, one-third more the number of sets.

Wireless Fund Christmas Appeal. Through the kindness of the B.B.C. the annual appeal of the Wireless Fund will be broadcast on Christmas evening at 8.55 p.m. by Mr. Christopher Stone, D.S.O., M.C.

The "Charity Attitude" Criticised.—Mr. H. Booth, himself blind, said at the annual meeting of the Oxford Society for the Blind last month that the segregation of the blind should be avoided, and a good many of the young blind felt that there was a sort of benevolent, charitable attitude towards the blind and an ignorance of the real nature of blindness. He would like to see a closer link between the younger and more active blind and the societies which existed to serve them.

New Sales Shop in Belfast.—The new sales shop for the Workshops for the Blind at 2-4, Bedford Street, Belfast, was formally opened last month by her Excellency the Countess Granville.

Mr. Herbert Quin, M.P., who apologised for the absence of the president, Viscount Charlemont, traced the development of the Association for Employment of the Industrious Blind since the inaugural meeting convened by Miss Hobson in 1871. He also acknowledged the Association's indebtedness to the Government and the Belfast Corporation for the help which they had given.

He disclosed that within recent weeks Mr. George Sherman, manager of the workshops, had been on a voyage of discovery, and as soon as raw materials became more abundant it would be possible to extend the sphere of activity of blind persons. It was hoped that

several new industries would be started, and that blind people would be able to take their places with sighted people in ordinary industries of many kinds.

Mr. William Grant, Minister of Health, and Mr. Brian Maginess, Minister of Labour, appealed for additional voluntary support of the Association.

A Successful Home in Wales.—At the annual meeting of the North Wales Society for the Blind held at Wrexham last month the following report was given in relation to the above home by the hon. secretary to the House Committee (Mrs. D. B. Jones, Heulwen, St. George-road, Abergele.)

"My fourth annual report furnishes further evidence of the success and progress of the work done for the blind at the Llys Onnen Home. The happiness and serenity which the guests experience at the Home are at once a tribute to the loving care bestowed upon them and a reward for the devoted labours of all connected with this, a truly Christian work.

The Home makes provision for a number of aged blind who have no relatives or friends to cheer their declining years, and to them Llys Onnen is the only home they know. Building operations on urgently needed extensions are likely to start at an early date.

New Hostel at West Hartlepool.—Recently Hartlepool's Workshops for the Blind decided to purchase the property named "Fairlawn" situated at the junction of Grange Road and Welldeck Road, and to establish a hostel for those aged blind persons who were either living alone or under unsuitable conditions.

Blind Children Neglected.—Councillor James O'Keeffe, General Secretary of the Irish National League of the Blind, in the course of a paper read at the annual conference of the League last month in Dublin, said that in Eire a very considerable number of blind children were totally neglected in matters of education, their terrible handicap of blindness being intensely aggravated in after life by the fact that they

The approximate initial cost of the scheme will be £3,000, the whole of which will be a charge upon the voluntary funds of the Society.

The Blind of Northern Ireland.—A resolution from the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Labour Party of Northern Ireland calling on the Government to assume sole responsibility for the welfare of the blind was unanimously adopted at the annual conference of the Party, held in the Grand Central Hotel, Belfast, last month.

Grateful Germans.—Four German blinded prisoners-of-war who were helped to learn Braille and typewriting by Mr. Tommy Milligan, instructor at St. Dunstan's Training Centre, Church Stretton, typed a letter of thanks before returning to Germany. They sent "heartiest regards from your four foster-children," and promised to write a letter in Braille and a soldier story dedicated to St. Dunstan's.

No County Home Yet.—Northamptonshire's Home for the Blind is not likely to be built for several years yet, declared the Marquess of Exeter, when he presided at the annual meeting this month of Northampton (Town and County) Association for the Blind. The rise in building costs meant that it was unlikely that sufficient money would be raised to begin the project for a considerable time. The Association has set aside £2,000 towards the cost of the Home, and a special building appeal will be launched.

Return from Evacuation.—The Royal Victoria School for the Blind has returned from Wither Slack Hall, Grange-over-Sands, Lancs., to Benwell Dene, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

EMPIRE NEWS

had been denied the ordinary educational facilities which other children enjoy. When this was contrasted with the position obtaining in Britain for the past 50 years it was found that this country had made no progress in this regard; it was true to say that during the past 20 years there had been a definite deterioration in this as in all other spheres of blind welfare activities.

FOREIGN NEWS

Swedish Blind in Sighted Industry.—The impetus given by the war to the employment of blind people in sighted industry is noticeable even in neutral countries. We learn from the annual report of the Institute for the Blind at Tomtebodavägen, Stockholm, that a number of young Swedish blind people have been working in

factories, while others have carried on certain factory processes in their own homes. Herr Karl Montan was responsible for this placement, and as he has now been appointed to the Labour Commission, it is hoped that he will be able to enlarge the opportunities for the blind in the industrial field.

THE PRESENT PROBLEMS OF THE BLIND

III.—Helping the Blind Abroad, and those going Blind

By TRITONE.

IN a previous article I hinted at the possibility of welfare work for the blind becoming not merely national but international. Prior to the war in Europe, such an international organisation for the care of the blind was at work, but I am unaware as yet how far it has been possible for its activities to be renewed.

However, the thought gives rise to the question, "What can the blind of this country do for the blind in European countries devastated by war, not so much through organisations *for* the blind as through organisations *of* the blind; can they do anything, and if so, what and how?"

This is the problem which I propose to discuss.

To my mind it presupposes we blind first setting our own house in order. What we need is certainly a unification of British Societies for the Blind under one central body, an organisation which will control the various areas of the country where at present Societies engaged in Blind Welfare are doing splendid work, but in a self-contained manner, all having the same excellent object in view, but acting on their own lines independently of each other. Surely greater co-ordination is needed in Blind Welfare, and the solution, as I have already hinted, would seem to be a National Council. If the blind themselves are to help, we must first get into closer touch with each other and form something in the nature of a union, a league, a guild—call it what you will—by which the blind themselves can be fused or forged into a body able to make their opinions known and felt. Such a body, and only such a body, could make a definite plan among themselves for the benefit of the blind of Europe, and what finer work could there be than to set on foot a movement for meeting the mental and spiritual needs of our continental brethren?

The schools and universities abroad are being set going again; and books are being sent out; cannot we do something toward the provision of books in Braille or other type in the various languages necessary? We can surely launch an appeal for funds, bring the needs to the notice of those in power and those endowed with sufficient means to help in this work. "A pound of help is worth a ton of sympathy," is an old and tried adage. If we

blind earnestly desire as a body to bring such help to our blind fellows we must get together in order to do so—not just leave it to societies working for our welfare.

Again, something might be done if the blind under the various county organisations were to adopt and get into touch with the blind in similar areas in one of the devastated countries. Such an effort would at least lessen the feeling of loneliness, of being cut off, even more than the sighted population, from a country such as our own which, whatever it has suffered, has preserved its civilisation and culture and is not compelled to "stoop and build it up with worn-out tools."

The magnitude of the task may seem almost appalling, its difficulties insurmountable, but many great undertakings have grown from small beginnings, and good will and enthusiasm can do much. If every blind person in Britain could get into touch with one blind person on the continent and commence a regular correspondence weekly or monthly, it would be a beginning. There may, for aught I know, be those among us at home who already have blind friends abroad with whom they have not lost touch or, having done so, have regained it with some other blind friend.

Herein would be a nucleus upon which we could build.

Later, when travel becomes possible again, surely organised visits could be exchanged and thus the union that we had formed at home could grow into an international organisation.

Can we do anything? It seems to me that we can. Again there are among us many blind handicraftsmen. Can we not get into touch with the blind of the Continent who practise or have practised the same handicraft, engaged in the same trade or profession? For instance, might not blind members of trades unions, by approaching their leaders, get into touch with their opposite numbers through the medium of the I.L.O.? In many of the devastated countries the trades unions are being revived where they have been suppressed, or instituted where they had not previously existed. Now that the universities and schools are reopening, what of the blind students and scholars? Could this not be another point of contact?

Is it possible to do this without the help of the existing organisations for the blind? Not wholly, I think. They at least could give us a lead, could provide the means of contact in Britain in the first instance. If they could, then it is up to those of us whose interests in the blind abroad are sufficiently great, whose sympathies are sufficiently wide, to voice their desire to help and so start the first link in a vast network which might bring the blind of every country in Europe to the mutual help of one another, whereby the lot of the less fortunate might be alleviated by those of us in this and other countries who have mercifully escaped the worst ravages of this most terrible war.

There is yet another point which deserves consideration. Here at home, and perhaps even more so abroad, there are those who through the war and the circumstances directly or indirectly attributable to it, are threatened with inevitable blindness at some future date near or distant. They have to face the prospect of deteriorating sight. Officially these people are not blind and cannot benefit from the work of any recognised organisation.

Yet at this most critical period they surely need help as badly as those whose loss of sight has been definite and more or less sudden.

Not only do they need advice and help, but the encouragement to face the slow and gradual darkening of the world about them, to prepare themselves while the light is yet with them for the day when it will be withdrawn.

A case of this nature has lately been brought home to me by a fairly intimate contact with an elderly lady whose sight was slowly failing. She was facing the prospect quite bravely, still managing to write her letters but unable to read, and feeling that it was too late in the day to attempt to learn Braille. I quoted the example of the late Lord Grey, though, I fear, to little purpose. He being faced with inevitable blindness began at once to read Braille, and by the time he had become blind was quite an adept reader, though, I believe, in the more elementary forms of the type. True, my elderly acquaintance was living in rather a remote spot and the difficulties of instruction were therefore magnified. Now she has gone to live in a Midland city where, perhaps, she will have less difficulty in finding tuition.

Another case which I met a good many years ago was that of a young lady engaged in secretarial work of an important nature, undergoing treatment which it was hoped might arrest the trouble and at least leave her sufficient sight to carry on. I suggested to her that while she could yet see she should learn to read and write Braille

and type it. Her reply was that such a course would deprive her of the one hope she had. Understandable, perhaps, in one so young. Our acquaintance was but brief: "ships that pass in the night, and speak to each other in passing." But I have never forgotten it and still hope that she found others whose persuasion carried more weight than mine.

If any words of mine can urge those who have friends or acquaintances similarly situated, or those sighted people who work among the blind, or other blind people whom these words may reach, to get in touch and help in such preparatory education of those threatened with blindness, I earnestly hope they will do what they can for these cases.

Perhaps it is not too much to hope that the description "*blind*" may be expanded by the various organisations whose aim is to help the blind, so as to include these cases in their valuable work. At present there is no official organisation to deal with those going blind. They must actually be blind before they can be helped by any society whose very nature confines them to the assistance of the definitely blind. There should be a means of helping them either by a less inelastic interpretation of the word itself, an ability and power to expand the range of their efforts, or, alternatively, the formation of a kindred and perhaps subsidiary organisation or society for such preparatory educational work, to help to see these people through a period of mental suffering which can hardly be exaggerated.

To those who would desire to help I would suggest that an infinity of tact, patience and sympathy are necessary qualifications, for it is not education alone that is needed, but the heartening and encouragement in the period, short or long, between the oculist's verdict and the inevitable day when the darkness falls, and the farewell must be made to the brightness and the beauty of the world around them and the knowledge that the memory of treasured sights will be all that is left to them.

I have already advanced the axiom that only the blind knows the needs of the blind. I would add to this that the blind themselves can do more to help those who are going blind than many a sighted person. I repeat there must be many such in the devastated countries as well as our own. There will always be those at hand who, by the nature of their calling, will teach them the need of resignation and fortitude to the inevitable, the necessity to adjust their lives to the new conditions into which sooner or later they must enter. But surely this is not all. There must be others who will point them a way, encourage and help them not to be afraid;

those upon whom they can rely for help to prepare them not only to help themselves but to progress, until at last they can find positive

cause for pleasure and pride in their ability, to live their own lives with satisfaction and to pass on the help to others that need it.

IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS OF THE DEAF-BLIND

By D. D. BROWN

The following suggestions by a deaf-blind man are from a prizewinning entry in a competition run by "The Braille Rainbow."

1. Childhood and Education.

The number of cases of deaf-blindness in childhood is, we believe, steadily decreasing, thanks to the country's improved Public Health Service, but there are always likely to be a few whom science cannot save from this misfortune. Parents of such children should be persuaded to send them to a special school for the blind where the staff has already some experience in dealing with such pupils. The deaf-blind child should from the first be treated in exactly the same way as other children. He should on no account be pitied and spoilt on account of his affliction, but be subject to the ordinary discipline of the school and receive exactly the same training. Care should, however, be taken to see that these children are not in any way ill-treated by certain of the hearing children. In any difficulty that might arise the teacher or Matron should give the deaf-blind child every chance to state his case, helping him when necessary. Those responsible should never forget that it is natural for certain types of normal children to try to take advantage of a less fortunate schoolfellow. The deaf-blind child will, of course, often require individual instruction, and if his speech is good, as often it will be, every effort should be made not only to preserve the faculty but to develop it. If the deaf-blind child is healthy he can take part in such recreations as running and swimming and this will increase the other pupils' respect for him. He can also be taught to play chess, draughts and dominoes, and compete with others on quite equal terms.

2. Youth.

Every deaf-blind boy and girl should have the opportunity to learn some useful trade. It should be one that requires some skill and careful attention. This will keep their minds occupied and diminish any tendency to brooding. They should live in hostels during training, where they will have the company of old schoolmates who are able to talk to them in the manual, and the other trainees should be encouraged to take them out not only for an occasional walk but to meetings, football matches, etc., and give them

a running commentary on the proceedings or the game. No restrictions should be put on the freedom of the young deaf-blind person which his more fortunate fellows are not obliged to observe. If he has a desire to go out in the streets alone this should be encouraged. If workshop authorities were given to understand that they have no greater responsibility for a deaf-blind trainee than for any other there would be less temptation to impose awkward restrictions upon our young people.

3. Adult Life.

A large proportion of our class have not suffered seriously from the double handicap until they have reached adult life. If they are already employed as blind persons they should be given every opportunity to carry on in their employment if they enjoy normal health apart from their affliction. Deaf persons who have become blind should be given facilities for training as blind persons, but if they are already skilled in work which they can perform quite well without their former sight no obstacles should be put in their way. They should be paid at exactly the same rates as other employees, enjoying no privileges and suffering no hardships.

No difficulty should be placed in the way of a young man of ordinary intelligence and good health who desires to get married. Marriages with a suitable person is by far the best solution of his problem.

A considerable number of our people, for one reason or another, will be found unsuitable for employment. How to deal with this section is perhaps the most difficult aspect of the problem. It is often very difficult for our people who have no home with relatives to find suitable accommodation, and where it does happen that a deaf-blind person lives with relatives the position is not by any means a happy one, owing largely to the misunderstanding and ignorance of the other members of the family. Every deaf-blind man or woman of spirit will endeavour to solve private difficulties for himself, and every encouragement must be given them to do so, but for those for

whom no private arrangements can be made there ought to be suitable Homes provided by the authorities.

Opinion differs widely as to the best kind of Home, but we are all agreed about one thing, there must be the greatest possible freedom for the individual, consistent with the efficient running of the Home. Whether we mix our people in Homes for the blind or for the deaf, or in special Homes, they must be free to come and go and live ordinary self-respecting lives like other citizens. Too often in the past public authorities have disposed of deaf-blind persons by dumping them in Poor Law Institutions, or even into mental hospitals, where they are subject to the torments of a living death. A deaf-blind person is not necessarily a mental defective, and in most cases he is not; however, it is not to be wondered at if some have gone "queer" after spending years in such institutions as mentioned above.

Something has been done in recent years by societies for the blind to brighten the lives of our people, but we respectfully suggest that a great deal more requires to be done in this direction. The College of Teachers of the Blind makes a knowledge of the Manual Alphabet compulsory for the Home Teachers, but the standard of efficiency required is not high, and very few Home Teachers seem to have any real understanding of a deaf-blind "case." (Indeed, all public servants should be required to have a knowledge of the Manual Alphabet.) Some, we understand, when paying their official call spend the greater part of the time gossiping with the hearing members of the household, and say no more to the deaf-blind person than a conventional "How are you?" They show little practical interest. There are exceptions, however, and some encourage our people to attend their handicraft classes and recreation meetings. A few though, while being well-meaning, are apt to treat grown folk like children.

We would submit that, wherever possible, such as large industrial areas where a considerable number of doubly handicapped may be found, a Home Teacher with an aptitude for dealing with such people should be specially appointed, and it should be the duty of such a Home Teacher not only to visit the people but to endeavour to find volunteers of the right sort to do so, and take them out not only for walks but to their homes for tea or to other friends' homes.

Speaking generally, much less has been done for our community by the societies for the deaf which in many cases regard this work as outside their province. Often, too, it is felt by these deaf organisations that the deaf-blind are adequately provided for under the Blind Persons Act, and that there are many among the

seeing deaf who need their attention much more. But the deaf-blind can never be properly provided for by the blind societies alone. It should be the duty of deaf missions to attend to the spiritual welfare of our people, for they are as a rule eminently suited for this work. It has been proved in a few cases where the missionary happens to take a personal interest in the blind members of his flock that a very full measure of happiness has resulted. The deaf church too, under favourable conditions, is eminently suited to our needs. For a competent interpreter is able to convey every word of a service to a deaf-blind friend. There are a few missions where blind members are provided with interpreters every Sunday, and this proves an enormous boon. We would, therefore, suggest that it be made a duty of all deaf missions to attend to the spiritual and social welfare of blind-deaf persons. The material needs can be left in the hands of the blind societies. We are in such a position that we need all that *both* can give.

5. General.

In order to be as independent as possible our people must have the means of free expression. This can be attained best through the written word. Therefore, it ought to be the duty of the State to provide every doubly handicapped person who is capable of using them with a typewriter and braille machine free of charge. Library facilities are already available, but it would be a great service if we could have certain periodicals provided free. It is now recognised that a blind person requires a larger sum to maintain him than an ordinary person, but it is not so well understood that a deaf-blind individual needs still more. We would suggest that each deaf-blind adult should receive an additional ten shillings a week over and above the maximum blind allowance in order to enable him to pay for errands which he cannot do himself, or, in the case of a woman, to help pay for any necessary household assistance. Deaf missions should be given grants to enable them to pay for guides to take our people to church and elsewhere when voluntary service is not forthcoming. Hearing aids should be provided free to partially deaf persons who, on the advice of a competent doctor, would be likely to benefit from such.

In conclusion, the aim of our organisation is to secure the greatest measure of happiness for our people. This can only be attained if they are treated like ordinary citizens and freed as far as possible from official "supervision." Those suffering from other disabilities in addition will, of course, require special treatment, but given such help as suggested here most should be able to live normal lives.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOMES OF RECOVERY

SINCE 1940, 218 men, women and children, blinded by enemy action, have been reported to the National Institute for the Blind (as distinct from approximately three times that number of men and women blinded on active service, who come under the care of St. Dunstan's). One hundred and thirty-five civilians have passed through the Queen Elizabeth Homes of Recovery at Long Meadow, Goring-on-Thames; America Lodge, Torquay; and Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth; and these Homes have also received a limited number of other newly blinded people. Seventy-seven of the war casualties have so completely readjusted themselves to the new conditions which blindness imposes on them that, after a period of approximately three months in the Homes, they have been ready to face the future with courage and confidence, and have taken up work as telephonists, masseurs, or workers in sighted industry: housewives have taken up their duties again in their own homes, and the children have entered schools for the blind. This has been done despite the fact that, in many instances, these people have suffered multiple injuries in addition to blindness.

The Institute has received notification to the effect that among the prisoners of war, now being repatriated from the East, there may be a

number of civilians who have lost their sight as a result of privation while in enemy hands, and who will require a period of rehabilitation. Apart from these cases we can now assume that we are nearing the end of potential war casualty cases, although a certain number of seriously injured and shocked cases still require a prolonged period of readjustment.

The time, therefore, has come when more adequate attention can be given to those newly blinded cases who have lost their sight from causes other than enemy action. The work of helping these newly blinded people to readjust themselves will proceed on the same lines as have been adopted in the case of the war casualties, namely, the recovery of confidence and competence, and re-education, including the formal teaching of Braille, Moon, Typewriting and Handicrafts; with the addition in all probability of training in the use of machinery by means of a mechanical installation, to accustom the blind people to operate machinery with ease, and without fear.

Applications for admission to the Queen Elizabeth Homes of Recovery will be gladly considered by the Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind, and should be made through the appropriate local Association for the Blind.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Chronology of Blind Welfare.

SIR,—In April, 1942, I wrote to you with reference to the projected second volume of the *Chronology of Blind Welfare*, compiled by me with the help of Miss Thomas. In my letter I asked Headmasters, Managers and Secretaries of Institutions for the Blind to send me any facts connected with the bodies for which they were responsible which they considered worthy of record.

Owing to wartime restrictions on publishing, it was decided to postpone the issue of the *Chronology* until after the war, but I am now collecting material for the years between 1931 and 1945 inclusive, and should be grateful if you will permit me, through THE NEW BEACON, to renew my former request. Those willing to help in the way indicated above are asked to communicate with me at 19, Crawford Street,

London, W.1, if possible not later than February 1946. Yours, etc.,

HENRY J. WAGG.

To the Editor.

"The New Beacon" in Braille.

SIR,—I would like most heartily to endorse Mr. Vickerstaff's suggestion that THE NEW BEACON should be published in Braille. If THE NEW BEACON interests blind folk at all, and as a working Home Teacher I believe it to be of great interest, surely it should be possible for blind folk to read it. At present a blind person can only learn its contents by taking up two people's time and, having obtained the services of a willing reader, he is still debarred from referring to the various articles a second time.

Personally I would like to become a regular subscriber to THE NEW BEACON, but as it is not in Braille, I borrow somebody else's copy.

Yours, etc.,

EDWARD E. CROWE.

To the Editor.

"The New Beacon" in Braille.

SIR,—Will you allow me to comment on the question raised by Mr. H. N. Vickerstaff, in the November issue of this journal?

I shall be understating my feelings when I say that it was with more than a little satisfaction that I noted: Here is yet another voice added to those who have already spoken in order to urge the need for a Braille edition of THE NEW BEACON—in its entirety. Don't let us forget that word, which Mr. Vickerstaff used. We would like the lot in Braille, not just an abridged version of the inkprint edition.

I myself am very much more fortunate than Mr. Vickerstaff and all the other folk who are unable to read letterpress, for I can just about manage to get through my copy by using what I believe is called "a plus eight" magnifying glass—polishing my nose on the paper as I read. I dare not try to read more than a page at one time, so I feel sure that if you, Sir, could see me wrestling with my copy each month, you would go off straightway to the proper quarter and proceed to put up an unchallengeable

argument for a Braille edition of THE NEW BEACON.

I am not, in the least degree, competent to discuss the difficulties if this task were to be undertaken, but if it can be ascertained that the demand is sufficiently large to make it worth while, I respectfully suggest that the task should be undertaken with the least possible delay.

Whether we are likely to get this Braille edition or not, I know that it would gladden the hearts of many of us if we had the chance to read THE NEW BEACON regularly, and I, for one, shall live in hope. Yours, etc.,

J. GITTINS.

To the Editor.

"The Tribune."

SIR,—At a recent delegates' conference of the National Association of Blind Workers it was decided that publication of "The Tribune" shall be discontinued. This step has become necessary owing to the death of Miss Cleaver, the late editor of this magazine.

Yours, etc.,

WINIFRED D. ARCHER,
Hon. General Secretary.

PERSONALIA

The Rev. A. R. COOPER has resigned as General Secretary of the Southampton Association for the Welfare of the Blind, a position he has held for nearly six years. He has been appointed Secretary Manager of the Sailors' Home, Southampton.

* * *

LORD LEVERHULME has been appointed President of the National Deaf-Blind Helpers League in place of Lady Hawley who now becomes a Patron.

* * *

Lt-Col. C. A. JOHNSTONE SMITH has been elected Chairman of the Kent County Association in place of Mrs. HEWLETT HOBBS, who has resigned, and Mr. F. T. LAMBE has been elected Vice-Chairman.

* * *

Last month we briefly mentioned the impending retirement of Mr. ALFRED E. CHEEK, Secretary and Manager of the Royal Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Institution for the blind. Mr. Cheek's first experience of blind welfare work began in 1901, when he was asked to take charge of a department at the Associa-

tion for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, Tottenham Court Road, London. In 1907, he was appointed manager of the Leicester Institution and soon after was asked to undertake the combined duties of Secretary and Manager. Mr. Cheek has been Chairman of the Midland Area Committee of the National Association of Workshops for the Blind from 1937 to 1942 and a member of the Association Executive Committee since its inception until 1942. Recently he was appointed to serve on the Disablement Advisory Committee for the Leicester area, in connection with the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act. It is to be hoped that in his retirement, Mr. Cheek will still find an opportunity of giving Blind Welfare the benefit of his long experience and devotion to the cause which has meant so much to the blind of Leicester.

* * *

The Homes Section of the National Institute for the Blind has become the Homes Department, with Miss THOMPSON as its Head. The formation of a Homes Department is partly due to the growth of the work of the Homes, but is also a recognition of Miss Thompson's ability in the work which she has been carrying on since 1930.

“FOR NECESSARY ACTION”

ONE means by which we can gain an insight into the ways and ideas of the blind masses to whom we referred last month is through the correspondence columns of the Braille journals. Recently we have tried to open this window a little wider by including in *THE NEW BEACON* extracts from letters appearing in *Progress*, and we hope that our readers are making a point of looking through and noting what they see—for they will see much to interest them and perhaps as much to instruct. No doubt some of us are apt at times to get into the rut of regarding Blind Welfare as a rigid structure composed on the one hand of Institutions and Committees, Cases and Case-sheets, Appeals and Responses, and, on the other hand, of Acts of Parliament, Conferences and Resolutions, Rates and Relief. In reality Blind Welfare is a structure of a very different kind. Built on the human heart, it should be as flexible as the understanding, as profound and lasting as the affections. It should be as free as nature is from the iron tyranny of systems and definitions. It is a duty of administrators of Blind Welfare to supple and fertilise the service, and in doing so they must keep an ever watchful and resourceful eye on all manifestations of need. The service of the blind should be sufficiently elastic to meet every need, if need be. Major need must come before minor need; general, before individual; but that doesn't mean that minor and individual needs can be overlooked. The meeting of them shouldn't even be postponed unless there is good reason for doing so, e.g., lack of money.

In the extracts from letters we have mentioned, several present needs of the blind have been expressed. What is the nature of these? Are they eccentric, impossible, not worthy of serious consideration? Let us look at some of them. A practical blind poultry-keeper, with 15 years' experience, asks if some kind of Association can be formed to help blind poultry-keepers with advice and equipment. A blind person contrasts the “dog's life” led by many blind people in private lodgings with the comforts of one of the N.I.B.'s Homes, implying the need for more such Homes. Another deplores the fact that there is no special agency for helping blind people to find work as lecturers, and asks if the N.I.B. or the National Association of Blind Workers can do something about it. Several Braille readers express the need for a Braille daily newspaper or a popular weekly or a bi-weekly or a news summary. A blind user of the roads emphasises the importance of training the ears to wheel-sounds in view of the “silent” engines of to-day. A blind typist calls for a Typewriter Maintenance Service for the blind in big cities which will regularly overhaul machines and keep them in good order.

Now here, in the course of a mere three months' extracts from some of the letters in *Progress*, we have expressed six ideas for helping the blind or of helping some of them. The ideas appear sound and practicable; none is far-fetched. What, then, is being done about them? Is any society or group of persons concerning themselves with them, examining them, finding out the possibilities? Or are they just ideas, flung on the waters, to drift away as so many ideas do?

On two points we can speak definitely. The needs for more Braille newspapers and more Homes for the blind are generally recognised, and steps are being taken to meet them. Whether a daily newspaper is practicable cannot be ascertained until normal conditions restore stable prices and supplies, but there cannot be the slightest doubt that a Braille daily would be an immense boon to thousands of blind people. New Homes for the Blind would likewise benefit thousands in a particularly individualistic way, but it will be a long time before they can materialise. Meanwhile, the condition of the blind in private lodgings is a matter which calls for immediate inquiry and, if necessary, remedy, but we must admit the almost insuperable difficulties which confront the investigator. Most people are inclined to think that all people are kind to the blind, but evidently there are some people who are not, and somehow the blind should be protected against exploitation and victimisation by such people. Can any of our readers suggest how?

As there are several professional blind poultry-keepers and probably many hundreds of blind people who keep poultry for personal use or as a hobby, there should be little difficulty in forming an Association of people with the same pursuit. Certainly more literature on the subject is called for, and it may be possible soon to issue a series of up-to-date lectures.

An agency for blind lecturers? Why not? The National Institute has an agency for blind musicians and piano-tuners, and could easily add a section dealing with blind lecturers. A Typewriter Maintenance Service could, we think, be secured in the London area by tactful approach to the big typewriter manufacturers, but it would first have to be proved that the service was needed by a number of private typewriter owners. The idea of educating the ear to wheel-sounds suggests the question: Is there any systematic aural instruction in schools for the blind? Are blind children being taught to use their ears as locality finders? If so, on what lines? If not, why not?

Most of our readers will, we think, agree with us that each of the matters raised by these correspondents is a subject for genuine investigation which should be pressed forward and not allowed to die from inanition. We shall make a point in future of bringing forward periodically any suggestions for service made by the people who best know what is needed—the blind themselves—and we hope that from our pages they will percolate into conferences and councils and eventually secure the “necessary action” at which they aim.

THE EDITOR.

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD

By F. BURVILLE

PLANNING for future employment of the blind rests, of course, primarily with those persons in high authority, but in these days of privilege and licence it is possible for the ordinary man to express his views publicly and remain friends with the planners.

Therefore, as an ordinary man, I beg leave to set before the reader some conclusions which I have reached after giving the subject of “Future Employment of the Blind” considerable thought and study.

When deliberating upon the possibilities of the future, we are almost certain to make a comparison between our high hopes and aspirations for the future with the disappointments and failures of the past. Fortified by the knowledge of war-time successes in the fields of employment, our imagination may lure us into the belief that wishful thinking is half way to success in planning for the future. We become so sure in ourselves that our mental processes are sound and stable that we presume to submerge the work done by our workshops in a deluge of figures in an attempt to prove that “Workshops for the Blind,” as employing agencies, have been a complete failure. We are sometimes in danger of becoming so blind when peering into the future that we perhaps do not see the “wood” for the trees. It is because I believe that a successful future cannot be built without due regard to the achievements and failures of the past, that I essay to make an analysis of the events which have come within my own experiences since the year 1915, so that the reader may get a more intimate understanding of the work which has been done and that which has been left undone by the Blind Welfare Agencies

(which we know familiarly as “Workshops for the Blind”), than can be gained by mathematical calculation, whether it be in the form of equations or as £ s.d.

It is not my intention here to paint a picture of the sad long ago, wherein our workshops had their early beginnings. But I would suggest that the account given in the September and November numbers of THE NEW BEACON of Henry Mayhew’s description of blind Londoners in the 1850’s will serve to refresh our memories of the lives of the blind in those early days. We should, I think, honour the memory and value the honorary work done by men and women of “better” fortune on behalf of the blind to make their lives happier by providing for the various forms of useful employment.

For the purpose of our present analysis we will go back 30 years only. We will take careful stock of creditable achievement, and endeavour to place as true a value on this side of workshop activity as, on the other side of our stock-taking, we admit “failure” to the debit side of the account, writing the word “failure” indelibly in our minds, for the purpose of making a true assessment of the work done, as well as the work which has been left undone, that planning in the future may become the richer from the knowledge and experience gained from the past.

Thirty years ago, few of our workshops saw eye-to-eye in the matter of policy in their administration of welfare work for the folk in their charge. It is an understatement to say that there existed a lack of understanding, or that there was an absence of co-ordinated effort between them. The mental approach to their work of charity displayed a lamentable conflict of ideals. To emphasise the truth of the fore-

going, let me remind the reader that in the year 1916, a progressive few of our managements had accepted the principle of "negotiation" with workers' committees; had discussed, and put into practice annual holidays with pay. That is actual history, and shows us that some of our workshops were as advanced in their outlook on behalf of the workers as our most modern employers are to-day.

The conflicting elements, on the other hand, still refused to concede to their blind folk even the right to think in their own interests, as a simple illustration will show. A young man, having been fortunate enough to obtain a job in one of our workshops, took immediate aversion to the cynical and querulous disposition of his workmates, and after satisfying himself that men could be affected by environment, decided to ask the Head to provide improved amenities for the men, who after all spent quite a large portion of their waking hours in the workshop. With the inexperience of youth, our young friend began by showing his emotions with a crude, "I think, sir——" He did not get any further. "You are not here to think," said the Head; "I am here to do any thinking that may be required." To show that, at heart, the Head was a decent sort, his final rejoinder must be given. "Go back to your work, and I will overlook your behaviour this time, as you no doubt thought you were acting in the best interests of your fellows."

Here, then, we have the two schools of thought. In the one case, a progressive, expansionist policy, based on the liberty of the subject, and a workshop where men were treated as men and expected to behave as men should. In the other case, we have a policy based on "Bumbledom" with its attendant petty rules, which served no purpose other than to bolster up a code of moral behaviour which, in the minds of thoughtful men, had long since defeated the object for which it had been intended to serve.

The year 1920, as we all know, brought with it the passing of the Blind Persons Act, and soon Government aid came along and a liberal stream of monetary assistance passed into the hands of our employing agencies. No longer had we the need to plead excuse for our short-comings on the grounds of poverty, for although available monies were not adequate to build a completely new world for the blind, the nation had gone to considerable expense to back the trust it had placed upon administrators of blind welfare work.

Ignorance, coupled with a poor sense of citizenship on the part of certain managers and workers, has in my view been responsible for

much of the failure to train and absorb the employable blind. These managers, having acclaimed that blind people could not do "this" or "that" kind of job, opened an easy avenue for workers to take the line of least resistance and so trade on their affliction as to claim the right to a standard of income with a minimum of effort. Such a policy is surely suicidal, for it not only strikes at the foundations of the natural law that a man should struggle for his livelihood, but sets up a complication of problems, the least of which is related to the desirability of the worker striving to become a first-rate craftsman.

Perhaps the reader will consider the word "ignorance" as applied to managers and workers improper under present circumstances. If so, do not hesitate to point out the error of my verbal usages, but before objecting, please allow me to pass on concrete examples of what is meant by ignorance.

As recently as the year 1938, a sighted craftsman took a post as foreman to one of our workshops for the blind. Noting that the standard of workmanship and range of work done was confined to narrow limits, the foreman made a point of discussing the matter with the manager with a view to raising the standard of workmanship and broadening the range of work. Imagine the surprise of the foreman when he received a kindly corrective from his manager. "I am afraid we must appear very poor by your experiences in the seeing world; but we must face facts, and realise that when we have lost our eyesight, very definite limitations are placed upon us." On further investigation, the newly-made foreman discovered that the workers took the same view, and gave it as a fact to be recognised that blind workmen just could not do certain lines of work and at the same time earn a satisfactory wage. All efforts on the part of the foreman to convince the parties that his own experience told him that blind persons were capable of performing in a much wider field than they thought possible, failed to make any impression whatsoever upon them. It so happened that the foreman had, some time before his appointment, worked in another workshop which possessed a progressive manager, and had received quite an amount of coaching in methods of blind workshop practice. There, he saw all kinds of work being done, as indeed, he might have seen in other shops with the right type of management in charge. It transpired at a later date, that the foreman and manager had occasion to visit the area wherein the workshop of good repute was situated. Nothing daunted, the foreman pre-

vailed upon the manager to make a close inspection of the blind men at work, where he would be able to see the very types of work that he and his men held could not be made by them. Notwithstanding this opportunity, the manager could not be convinced until a totally blind workman made a special demonstration with verbal explanations. These explanations included information on actual wages being earned by a number of the workers, ranging from the highest to the lowest rate of earning capacity of the men concerned.

To instance the foresight and sincerity of other managers who were not willing to take the line of least resistance, machinery had long since been set up whereby craft instructors might obtain a diploma by an examination as to their ability as craftsmen and teachers. For managers to set up such a scheme was indeed sincerity itself; for surely it was an admission of weakness in their own methods of training. It showed that they were anxious to give only the best to industry and they tackled the problem of employment at the foundations, which is, as everyone knows, the training period of any person's life. In point of fact, apart from a handful of instructors with suitable qualifica-

tions, most instructors were not good enough at their job to command a reasonable salary. To quote from an official note on the craft instructor's examination: "The purpose of the examination is to procure a better type of instructor than is generally available." When we remember that we had administrators with foresight and initiative to introduce such a piece of machinery over thirty years ago, we shall do well before we turn aside from any advice or help they can give us for our future planning.

Some establishments have made use of this piece of machinery, and to-day we can boast of a larger number of qualified instructors among the blind. But numbers of managers turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to this innovation. Their attitude to the employment of qualified instructors is very simply this: "The blind worker can't do this, or that kind of work, so why bother to pay a qualified instructor?" Here again, we see on one side a progressive approach to the work in hand, and on the other, an indifference to responsibility and the needs of the blind industrialist. Under such circumstances, how is it possible for Managers to meet and discuss future employment of the blind on anything like a level plane of thought?

(To be concluded.)

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

By FRANK EYRE

WHEN, after more than thirty years of normal active life, I found myself in what, for want of a better term, we call the "Blind World," one of my first reactions was a sense of isolation. Inspired by the classic examples set by such people as Fawcett, Pearson, Helen Keller and many others, I sought to insist upon myself. I became a member of a Parish council, the secretary of a local orchestra, and engaged in other corporate activities in which I could both serve my neighbours and feel that I was not on a scrap heap. But I was conscious of the need to increase contact with birds of my own feather so I joined what was then called the National Union of the Blind. At first I assumed that people who had been blind for much longer than I had, knew all about the ramifications of Blind Welfare work and what was needed to ameliorate their conditions. Looking back, I now see that there was a remarkable lack of appreciation of what was being done, plenty of ill-informed prejudice and much magnification of imagined grievances. There was prevalent also a sort of naive semi-hysteria born, no doubt, of the ancient policy of segregation and

sentimentalism applied by many "charitable" folk cast in the Mrs. Jellyby mould who took a blind man by the ear, as it were, told him to be a grateful recipient of their charity and hold his tongue.

Thanks to the efforts of men such as Ben Purse and his coadjutors, a gradual improvement has been achieved; the organising of the blind community for its own advancement has brought about a more balanced attitude of mind, a reasonable sense of dignity and a constructive and well-informed approach to the problems which face us. The National Union changed its name to "The National Association of Blind Workers." It may not be able to point to any very spectacular achievement, but it has certainly taken its full share in forming the public opinion that has brought about considerable improvements.

My experience has proved to me that it is very difficult to organise the blind. Invite them to a ham tea or a Christmas party and submit them to an entertainment provided by mediocre or tenth-rate self-styled "artists" only too glad to inflict their amateur voices and their unfunny "turns" upon a set of people

who cannot easily escape, and the local rank and file of the blind will turn up by the score. Yes, and enjoy it, bless them! I am not railing against merry-makings. But ask them to meet once a month to get down to business and do some hard thinking, and the would-be organiser is riding for a discouraging fall. Let it be said, however, that the habit of finding it more blessed to receive than to give is by no means peculiar to the blind. Numbers are not the standard by which the value of an organisation should be assessed; it is always the faithful few who do the real work and always the many who will take with both hands the fruits cultivated by the altruists.

The march of events which is bringing about better conditions and opportunities for the blind has in itself created a need for the organisation to seek rejuvenation; the implementing of the Blind Persons Act, the Disability Employment legislation and the anticipation of enactments arising out of the Beveridge report, all these factors seem to have quieted the agitators and created a demand for an Association on new and broader lines than those of the present National Association. Some there are who resent changing the character of the Association by eliminating its Trade Union status. Others argue that there is something a trifle Gilbertian about a Trade Union of blind folk... Why not, they say, a Trade Union for Cripples or an Amalgamated Society of Albinos and Hæmophiles. Many think it would be so much more seemly if a blind person employed in any trade should, if he or she so desires, join the Trade Union appropriate to

that particular trade and that his blindness should be no bar to his membership. If a man is assembling parts or testing components in an engineering shop and is, by implication, told that he is not an engineer but a blind man, his normalcy is reduced and he is segregated because of his handicap. Blind people have only one thing in common, namely, blindness. Otherwise they are as diverse in social background, in education, in character and in political philosophy as any other category in the community. Surely, therefore, an organisation of the blind should have the widest possible terms of reference and be conceived on the broadest lines.

I have touched upon several controversial points and tried to express an outlook that is personal and entirely without propagandist intent; I hold that candour verging on indiscretion is better than insincerity masquerading as tact.

My purpose in this article is, with all humility, to ask all who are interested in Blind Welfare work to encourage with understanding support an Association "of" the blind co-operating with the representative charities "for" the blind. Thus will both branches of one tree function for the maximum good of the common stock. Those who seek to serve the blind, with their great experience and unique resources, will know what the blind want. And by strong and independent association the blind will be able to formulate what they want. For in order to get anything worth while it is necessary first of all to know what one wants.

BLIND OUTLOOK

Extracts from letters written to the Braille journal "Progress"

Rail "Concessions"?

"... I expect the notice in the November issue defining the decision of the Railway Clearing House on this subject [i.e., free voucher for guide only to be granted when the blind person is travelling in connection with his employment.—Ed.] will come as a blow to a considerable number, for while it is true that the privilege never allowed us to travel *ad lib.* guide free, for pleasure, it has come to be regarded for the past 15 years or so that the phrase 'for business purposes' was sufficiently elastic for a blind person and guide to journey for one fare for the 'business purpose' of recuperating the former's health, i.e., holidays.

"If we are to accept the ruling that the passes can only be issued to those of us who need them for our jobs, the term 'concession' becomes

practically void; for I doubt whether more than four or five per thousand travel by rail for strictly business reasons.

"I think it would be a good plan to approach the Railway Clearing House Committee and try to persuade them to allow such vouchers to be issued unreservedly to all registered blind persons."—C.F.P., Harrow.

More News, Please

"... We need a weekly or twice weekly paper, which would contain a summary of current affairs and news of more general and human interest. ... I don't want to listen to politics on the wireless and have nothing but politics to read in my paper."—M. McN., Uddington, Glasgow.

"... I thoroughly enjoy the *Braille Mail*, but some of the articles are too long. As a

review it fills the bill, and if it would be possible to use, say, four to eight pages in the centre as a news, correspondence or a feature column it would be an improvement."—J. O. H., Fishguard.

"... Could the N.I.B. print another newspaper entitled 'The Braille News' ... or add four more pages to the *Braille Mail* for news only?"—Anon.

"... Crowds of us, I'm sure, are waiting for a 'Sporting Paper' in Braille. I suggest that one might be edited on the lines of the old radio programme, *Sporting Record*."—A. J., Ripley.

"... I think the policy of the *Braille Mail* should be broadened so as to include other features, such as sport and items of the 'side-light' variety."—H. N. V., Birmingham.

Care of Talking Book Machines

"... I have had some practically new recordings lately which have been shamefully maltreated. ... When putting the pick-up on or taking it off a record, listeners should be very, very careful. Once a record is begun the pick-up should not be moved until one side is finished. Never change a record with a lighted pipe or

cigarette in the mouth. If these simple hints are observed, the life of a record will be considerably lengthened and listening enhanced."—H. T. B., Bolton.

A Plea from France (translated)

"... A friend has just lent me your magazine. We have nothing to read here except old books, and it was wonderful to have your periodical. Those blind people who know English are lucky for, thanks to your efforts, they can renew their contact with the outside world—after the years of coma through which we have passed we are greedier than ever for news of what is going on around us. Since there seems to be little chance of our own periodicals being printed again for some time to come, many of my friends have asked me to request your help for the French blind. It would indeed be a great blessing if you could supply our organisations with some paper—or if you could print your magazine in English and French. ... Not only would this double edition give much pleasure, but it would also provide useful study for English students of French and French students of English."—R. J., Marseille.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Organist's Fine Service.—Mr. Henry Brown, the blind organist of St. Mary's Church, Steeple Ashton, has retired. On his last Sunday, tribute to his work was paid by the Vicar (Rev. O. R. Yerburch). He said "It is only fitting and right to pay a tribute to the wonderful record of our organist, Mr. Henry Brown, who after 46 years of most faithful and devoted service, hands over his office after to-night to a younger man. For nearly half a century he has been coming backward and forward twice a Sunday from the Common in all winds and weathers, as well as during the week for choir practice. He has set an example not only of a wonderful triumph over a physical affliction but also what one of our hymns calls the cheapest grace 'Grace to Persevere.'"

As an appreciation of this service a presentation will be made to Mr. Brown.

A Blind Dancing Expert.—Blind since the age of 27, Mrs. Holdsworth, of 189, Wolverhampton Street, Dudley, who took up dancing two years ago at the age of 70 "just to pass the time," has already won many trophies. She holds the bronze, silver and gold medals of the British Association of Dancing Teachers (which she won after only 12 months' tuition) and has just

taken the bronze, silver and gold medals of the Midland Association with distinction.

Mrs. Holdsworth dances three times weekly. It was not long before she enlisted the services of a professional partner, Mr. N. Donaghy, simply because she found that partners of her own age were not sufficiently active, while the younger generation were just not good enough!

Before the last war she was known as Mme. Margril Worth, the blind vocalist, and her services were in demand at concerts. She now plans to enter for the gold bar in each Association.

A New Blind Councillor.—In the recent municipal elections, Mr. W. L. Wilson (Labour), a blind musical instrument dealer and tuner, was elected at Willesden, Middlesex. He has resided for 30 years in the district, and has always been interested in local government. Up to the outbreak of the war, he ran a dance band and during the war he entertained the troops. Merry Lass, Mr. Wilson's dog, shares the credit for the recent victory at the polling booths. For a fortnight before polling day she guided her master from door to door as he canvassed for votes.

"Cobbler, Cobbler, Mend My Shoe."—A correspondent in *John Bull* writes:—"In these

austerity days you can imagine my feelings when two fully trained boot repairers told me that my best pair of shoes was past mending. Eventually I sent them to a blind repairer—an ex-Serviceman of the last war trained by St. Dunstan's. Within four days they were back, soled and heeled, and nearly as good as new."

Court Grange on the Air.—Recently for the first time, the children at Court Grange School broadcast a recital in the West Regional Children's Hour. The children were treated with the utmost kindness at Plymouth and were allowed to handle a microphone and explore a studio before their broadcast. There was plenty of time for a visit to Plymouth Hoe after lunch, already familiar to the choir through the song "Drake's Drum," and the more adventurous spirits climbed the Smeaton Tower. They returned to the B.B.C. for tea and then came the tense moment when the studio red light flickered its warning and Court Grange was on the air. Immediately after the recital came a message from the Bristol headquarters that the performance had been satisfactory, and this was confirmed during the week by messages of congratulation from listeners as far distant as Great Yarmouth, Coventry and Paris. The children showed no trace of nervousness. It is a pleasing feature of the work of Court Grange children that they never "let the school down" in their public performances.

Blind Soprano's Song Recital.—Music lovers were afforded a feast of good things in Battersea Town Hall on 28th November, at a song recital by Doris Harwar, the blind soprano. It was the first full scale recital she has given. Following a group of songs by Bach, Miss Harwar displayed

great skill in her rendering of items by Wolf Schubert, and Brahms in German, and was loudly applauded. At the interval she was handed a bouquet by Miss Carrie Tubb, the well-known singer.

After the interval Miss Harwar again held her audience with a pleasing combination of ability and artistry, and her final item, "Praise ye the Lord" (Granville Bantock) was very impressive.

Proceeds were in aid of the National Children's Home and Orphanage and the Quaker Relief Fund.

The Blind Toymaker.—Dozens of Blackpool children joyfully finding beautiful toys beside their beds on Christmas morning will have a blind man to thank for them. He is Mr. Albert M. Wild, who though blind is working hard every day to complete many orders he has received for toys.

Behind the counter of his tiny shop he designs his own models—engines, motor cars, fire engines, dolls' beds, step-ladders, Noah's arks and guns—then makes them strongly and swiftly from wood. He saws, planes and hammers as cleverly as though he had full use of his eyes.

"I shall be working till late every day now till Christmas to get the toys finished," he told the *Manchester Evening Chronicle*.

Blind D.C.M.—Sergeant Leslie Constable, of the 8th Hussars, who is blind, was decorated by the King this month with the D.C.M. for gallantry in North Germany. He was three times wounded before losing first one eye and then the other. He is now at St. Dunstan's.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the death of:—

Miss Elizabeth McCall, at a Manchester nursing home. A former Board of Education Inspector of Domestic Schools, she joined the Board of Governors of Chorleywood College in February, 1938. She was keenly interested in the College, and her advice on domestic staff and domestic equipment was particularly valuable.

Mrs. Agnes Alexandra Millington, Blind Chartered Physiotherapist, on December 5th at St. George's Hospital, London.

Mrs. Chaplin Hall, O.B.E., writes:—"I first met 'Millie,' as Mrs. Millington was called by hundreds of her patients and friends, eighteen years ago, having heard much of her by corre-

spondence, and was immediately struck, as she walked into my room, by her exceptional personality and very great charm. She was possessed of outstanding good looks which, together with a sweet manner, quickly won many hearts. During her training she was conspicuously successful. She brought first-class intelligence to an entirely new form of work, and passed out well in all examinations at the end of her training period.

"The National Institute then proceeded, through its Massage Department, to establish Mrs. Millington at Bush House, Aldwych, where she earned a very great reputation for her work. She had many distinguished patients, many of

them household names, but she always found time to look after a clerk suffering from low back pain or flat feet. During the whole of the war period she kept going at Bush House, and her first action when she arrived at her clinic on the morning of September 4th, 1939, was to hang a Union Jack outside the door with a notice underneath, 'Business as usual.' During the war period many of her patients included Air Force Officers stationed in Bush House who benefited greatly from her expert skill.

"Mrs. Millington's practice was in every sense of the word a personal connection, and she herself used to joke with regard to the very large number of patients she got from one of the Home Counties, laughingly saying that she would have to adopt their 'Arms' as she had so many well known and influential patients from that particular district. She brought to her work not only skill, but wonderful patience and intuitive knowledge, and was regarded as possessing very great natural healing powers. In the long period of years connected with Blind Physiotherapists and their work, I have rarely come across any single individual who was more greatly appreciated and well beloved. *So be my passing, my task accomplished . . .*"

Miss Judith Anne Merivale, at Oxford, aged 85. For many years she was intimately connected with Blind Welfare, locally at Oxford as an active member of the Oxford Society for the Blind and of the Oxford Councils' Committee for the Blind, and nationally as a member of the Council of the National Institute for the Blind and of the Union of Counties Associations for the Blind. She had also been chairman of the Midland Counties Association of Societies for the Blind, and was one of the British delegates to the World Conference on Work for the Blind held in New York in 1931.

Miss Drew, Hon. Treasurer of the Oxford Society for the Blind, writes in the *Oxford Times* :—

"The present generation of the blind may not realise how much they owe to Miss Merivale's never failing zeal for their welfare and to her wonderful constructive brain which initiated so many of the schemes which are now looked upon as a commonplace not only in our own city but in the country at large. For over 30 years she was the most active member of the Oxford Society, undertaking many and varied duties connected with it; and after she retired from active participation in the work, she was always ready to give the sound and sympathetic advice needed in any difficult situation."

Francis John Darch, at Langport, aged 79. Mr. Darch, who was blind, was a fine musician

and was for many years a member of the Huis Episcopi Parish Choir.

George Mitchell Bonar, Draughts Editor of the *Falkirk Herald* for a long number of years. Despite his blindness he achieved a measure of distinction in the game of draughts, both as the author of games and problems and as an exponent, being an ex-champion of Scotland. He had a successful career, too, as a journalist.

Mrs. Hollins, widow of the famous blind organist-composer, Dr. Alfred Hollins, at Edinburgh. Through his long and distinguished career she was his "eyes." They met when Mrs. Hollins was on the teaching staff of the Royal Normal College for the Blind, and he was organist of St. Andrew's, Upper Norwood. To his wife's devotion he paid touching tribute in his autobiography, "A Blind Musician Looks Back."

Miss F. M. Wiggins, at Worthing, aged 69, one of the most able and valued members of the staff of the National Institute's Braille Manuscript Department. On the death of her father just before the 1914-18 war, she came to London to work as a V.A.D. at University College Hospital. Her health could not stand the strain of nursing and she transferred to the Ministry of Pensions in Regent's Park. While there she offered her services to St. Dunstan's to cox their boats on the lake, and this was the beginning of her interest in Blind Welfare. In 1920, she joined the staff of the National Institute as a reader and corrector of Braille. Her love of books and interest in young blind students provided her with the type of work she most liked, and except for her brief retirement in September, 1940, she continued to work on the Students' library staff for twenty-five years. On the evacuation of the blind members of the Transcribing and Manuscript Departments to Bournemouth in February, 1941, Miss Wiggins returned to help at Bournemouth, first as a full-time worker and then as half-time worker, which job she continued to hold until the end of last September. She had suffered a great deal from bronchial asthma during the last years, and it was this trouble which finally weakened her heart. Miss Wiggins was a woman of culture with an extensive knowledge of literature, and a fine critical judgment of it. She was a tireless worker, and if there was a chance to help a blind student in any way, she took endless pains to give that help. Many blind men now in the professions owe much to her untiring zeal.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND
224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1

NEW PUBLICATIONS

BRaille MUSIC

The prices of the following pieces of music are net and represent a fraction only of the actual cost of production.

Dances	
19311	Alstone. Symphony, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. 0 6
19312	Green, J. You came along, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. 0 6
19313	Hopper, H. There's no you, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. 0 6
19314	Kay, Gray and Roberts. I never mind, <i>Song Fox-Trot</i> .. 0 6

MOON BOOKS

4757	Westward Ho! re-told as a Short Story by Winston Churchill. Price 1s. (Grade 2 Moon). Daily Text Calendar, 1946. Price 1s. Date Calendar, 1946. Price 3d. Christmas Cards. Four varieties. Price 3d. each.
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APPARATUS

The price of the undermentioned article is increased from 30th November, 1945:—

Cat. No.	Article	List Price	Special Price*
9175	Shorthand Paper Guide now supplied with additional spool .. £1 7 0		18s. od.

* To blind individuals in British Empire.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARIES

STUDENTS' LIBRARY

	Vols.
Philosophy:	
McTaggart, J. M. E. Studies in the Hegelian dialectic	4
Theology:	
Micklem, E. R. A Book on the Bible for everyman	2
Payne, E. A. The Free Church tradition in the life of England	3
Peake's Commentary on the Bible—Exodus	2
Leviticus	1
Russell, A. J. (ed.). Their religion: the problem as seen by some famous men	4
Sheppard, H. R. L. Some of my religion	2
Smyth, Charles. The Friendship of Christ: a devotional study	2
Underhill, Evelyn. Mixed pastures: twelve essays and addresses	3
Social and Political:	
Berneri, M. L. Workers in Stalin's Russia	2
Macadam, Elizabeth. The social servant in the making	2
Economics:	
Beveridge, W. H. Full employment in a free society	8
British Association, Economic Science and Statistics Research Committee. Britain in recovery	9
Law:	
Lee, R. W. Cupidae Legum Juventuti: the elements of Roman Law with a translation of the Institutes of Justinian	11
Psychology:	
Lowy, S. Man and his fellowmen: modern chapters on social psychology	5
Mottram, V. H. Physical bases of personality	3

Literature:

Criticism

Wilson, N. S. European Drama	4
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Poetry

Roberts, D. M. (ed.). The Century's poetry, 1837-1937:—	
Part I.—Hood to Hardy	2
Part II.—Bridges to the present day	2

Prose

Eliot, T. S. (ed.). Introducing James Joyce: a selection from Joyce's prose	3
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Classics:

Tacitus. Annals, ed. H. Furneaux—	
Book I	2
Book II	2
Book III	2

Biography:

Austen, Jane, Talking of, by S. Kaye-Smith and G. B. Stern	4
Kilvert, Rev. Francis. Kilvert's Diary (1870-1879), ed. Plomer	7
Hinsley, Cardinal, by J. C. Heenan	4

Collective Biography

Bacharach, A. L. (ed.). Lives of Great Composers, Part II.—Beethoven and the Romantics	3
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History:

Oman, Charles. On the writing of history	4
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Miscellaneous:

Lin Yutang. China, my country and my people	6
Rolo, C. J. Wingate's Raiders	3
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MATILDA ZIEGLER MAGAZINE FOR THE BLIND.

Mr. Walter G. Holmes, President and Manager of the Matilda Ziegler Publishing Company for the Blind, Inc., Monsey, New York, tells us that readers of the Matilda Ziegler magazine are now able and anxious to resume their pre-war practice of sending on their magazines when they have read them to people abroad. Anyone wishing to receive this Braille magazine should write to the company at the above address, which will be glad to put applicants in touch with readers.

VACANCIES IN HOMES, ETC.

December, 1945

National Institute for the Blind

Name of Home	Vacancies
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Leamington	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, East Grinstead	1
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Haydon Bridge, Northumberland	—
Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, Northampton	—
Sunshine Home Nursery School, Northwood	1
Bloomfield, Leamington	—
Wavertree House, Hove	—
The Haven, Scarborough—Holiday Home	18
Fair Lawn, Totteridge (for convalescence, holiday or short periods of rest)	—
Home for the Deaf-Blind, Harrogate	—
Home of Recovery, Long Meadow, Goring	4
Home of Recovery, America Lodge, Torquay	6
School of Telephony, Oldbury Grange, Bridgnorth	2
31, Palace Court, London, W.2	1
Hostel for Blind Workers, Wimbledon	—
Arno, Ventnor, Isle of Wight	—

ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISING RATES: 1s. 6d. A LINE (MINIMUM 5s.)

ADVICE OR LESSONS IN DIETETICS given by correspondence. Also would lecture to guilds, etc. Robert Malton, Certificated dietitian, 18, Claremont Road, Folkestone, Kent.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLIND WORKERS.

All communications to the National Association of Blind Workers should be addressed to the Hon Secretary, Miss D. W. Archer, 33, Argyle Road, Reading, Berks.

INDIGENT BLIND VISITING SOCIETY.

Applications are invited for post of female Home Visitor for the Blind in London, with knowledge of Club work. Apply giving age and full particulars to Secretary, 51, Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME TEACHERS OF THE BLIND OF ENGLAND AND WALES. All Home Teachers are invited to join the Association. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, 29, Hawarden Crescent, Sunderland, Co. Durham.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND is appointing an Assistant to the Head of the Homes Department: experience of blind welfare and good office qualifications required. Apply with full particulars to Staff Secretary, 224-6-8, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

METROPOLITAN SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for post of Assistant Secretary. Knowledge of Social Welfare work essential. Apply stating age and qualifications with copies of two recent testimonials to Secretary, 51, Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1.

SOMERSET COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of Home Teacher for the area of South Somerset. Salary (if certificated) £180, rising by annual increments of £10 to £250, plus war bonus. Applicant must be able to drive a car. Apply to The Secretary, 3, The Crescent, Taunton.

MIDDLESEX ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of Home Teacher in the County of Middlesex. Salary (if certificated) £200 per annum, plus bonus, rising to £275 per annum, plus bonus.

Apply, stating age, experience and qualifications, to the Secretary, Middlesex Association for the Blind, 66, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

HOME TEACHERS' EXAMINATION, 1946. Candidates anxious to obtain guidance and qualified instruction to assist them in gaining the Diploma are invited to apply for particulars of a Correspondence Course to H. N. Vickerstaff, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, Court Oak Road, Birmingham, 17 (enclose 2½d. stamp). Many honours gained by previous subscribers.

THE COVENTRY SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND invites applications for the post of a female Home Teacher and Visitor—sighted and certificated. Salary according to experience.

Applications, with testimonials, and stating age and experience, to be addressed to Mrs. R. E. Staner, 7, St. Patrick's Road, Coventry.

WANTED. Dubied, Harrison or Foster Flat Machine on metal stand; 7 needles per inch; not less than 32-inch needle bed, racking over 3 needles. Must be certified in first-class working order. State price and cost of packing and delivery on board ship. Replies to be addressed to the Principal, The Athlone School for the Blind, Kassel's Vlei Road, Bellville, C.P., South Africa.

BLIND WELFARE. The London County Council has a vacancy for a woman organiser of its Pastime Occupation Schemes in London. The rate of pay is £225, rising by annual increments of £12. 10s. to £275 a year, together with a cost of living bonus at present £48 a year. Application forms and further particulars may be obtained from the Clerk of the Council (H), The County Hall, London, S.E.1.

VACANCIES will occur in the **QUEEN ELIZABETH HOMES OF RECOVERY** at Long Meadow, Goring-on-Thames, and America Lodge, Torquay, during the months of December and January, for newly blinded persons requiring rehabilitation. Application should be made to the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1, through the appropriate local Society for the Blind.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF DURHAM.

Applications are invited for the post of female (sighted) certificated Home Teacher and Visitor for the Blind. The successful applicant will be seconded for duty to the Sunderland and Durham County Incorporated Royal Institution for the Blind, Sunderland.

The appointment is subject to the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the successful candidate will be required to pass the County Council's medical examination. The salary scale is £3 per week, rising at annual intervals by 5s. per week to £4 per week, together with a cost of living bonus at present at the rate of 24s. per week. The commencing salary will be fixed in accordance with previous experience.

The appointment is subject to the regulations of the County Council as to sick pay, holidays, leave of absence for extraneous duties and any other regulations of the County Council affecting the Council's staff for the time being in force, and is terminable by one calendar month's notice on either side.

Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, and accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, should be forwarded to the undersigned not later than the 29th December, 1945. Shire Hall,

Durham.

IAN MCCrackEN,

County Medical Officer.

22nd November, 1945.

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